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BOSS SUSPENDED IN ZOO PROBE

By Andrew Turton

THE chief executive of Dudley Zoo has been suspended pending an investigation into his conduct.

Peter Suddock, who has been in charge of the zoo for more than 20 years, has been suspended on full pay.

It is understood the suspension relates to financial matters. Officials from the attraction, which was visited by more than 290,000 people in 2014, said the investigation was into his 'conduct of certain affairs of the zoo'.

Further details of the nature of the allegations have yet to be revealed and many trustees have been unavailable for comment.

Dudley Zoo, a registered charity, is governed by a board of trustees who are answerable to the Charity Commission. The body has revealed it will be monitoring the investigation after receiving a 'Serious Incident Report'.

A Charity Commission spokesman said: "We have received a Serious Incident Report from the charity making us aware of the suspension of the chief executive."

"The charity did the right thing in submitting this report to us. We are in contact with the trustees, who will be providing us with further information as their investigation progresses."

It is also understood that Mr Suddock's wife Jill Hitchman has left her post as head of media at the attraction. She told a follower on Twitter that she was 'no longer based' at Dudley Zoo.

Trustee, former Dudley Council leader Councillor David Sparks, said he could not comment on details due to 'legal considerations'.

He added: "I have kept the leader of the council and the chief legal officer informed of events to my knowledge."

Dudley Zoo said: "Peter Suddock, the CEO of Dudley Zoo, has been suspended on full pay pending an investigation into his conduct of certain affairs of the zoo."

"The suspension does not constitute disciplinary action by the zoo. Whether or not disciplinary action is taken will depend upon the outcome of the investigation."

Mr Suddock, a former chairman of the Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust, became chief executive of the attraction in 1993.

In recent years he has overseen major restoration projects at the site in Castle Hill, including the renovation of its chairlift. In the past decade more than £1 million of the zoo's own funds has been spent on a revamp of key areas across the site.

A further £3.05m has been in place for a four-year programme of improvement.



Peter Suddock

Gates removed from park in £3m renovation plan



The historic gates are removed from the entrance to Mary Stevens Park, Stourbridge, to be renovated

THEY were originally modelled on the entrance to Buckingham Palace. Now the finely decorated gates at Mary Stevens Park in Stourbridge are to get some tender, loving care as part of a £3.1 million renovation.

The 84-year-old wrought iron gates which mark the Heath Lane entrance, were removed in a painstaking process last weekend.

The Grade II listed gates were first put in place in 1931 after Ernest Stevens dedicated the park, named after his late wife Mary, to the people of Stourbridge.

Work to remove the ornate gates, which

haven't been modified or removed since they were installed, began on Saturday morning and workers remained on site until early evening. The gates will be sent away to be restored and repaired before they are returned to the park in July.

Important

Chairman of the Friends of Mary Stevens Park group, Councillor Heather Rogers, said: "These gates are such an important part of the park, which in turn is such an important place for the community."

"As far as I know, this is the first time the gates have ever been removed completely."

"They have been an enduring feature of the park since it was first donated to the people of Stourbridge by Ernest Stevens and were originally modelled on the gates outside of Buckingham Palace."

The gates have been removed as part of an overhaul of the park which has been funded by Lottery grants.

It will also see the bandstand, war memorial and pool updated, a new cafe and updated benches and railings.

AWARDS

Hospice scheme is put on shortlist

A £1 million expansion at Mary Stevens Hospice in Stourbridge has been nominated for a prestigious architecture award.

Work has been completed on the project as a home for a community care scheme. The building has now been shortlisted for a Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) West Midlands award.

The rebuild and refurbishment project, in conjunction with KKE Architects Ltd, cost £1,069,000 which included a grant of £509,000 from the Department of Health.

The results will be announced in Birmingham at the end of April.

ROCK

Star Hunt tells of the Wonder years

BLACK Country rock star Miles Hunt will be sharing stories of his rock 'n' roll life when he goes back to his roots this weekend.

The frontman of Stourbridge Indie group The Wonderstuff has released a book about the early years of the band - The Wonder Stuff Diaries 86-89 - and will be reading extracts at the Slade Rooms in Wolverhampton on Sunday.

He will also be performing tracks and taking questions from the audience from 8pm. Tickets are priced at £16.50.

RESTORATION

Surveyor sought for walled garden

VOLUNTEERS working to restore a Grade I listed walled garden in the grounds of a Halesowen park want to find a surveyor to help with their plans.

The Halesowen Abbey Trust want to return the walled garden at The Leasowes to its former glory. The group has employed an architect to come up with designs for how a rejuvenated garden would look.

Trust spokesman Mick Freer is appealing for a surveyor to come on board to help the team map the site out and work with the architect.

Anyone who can help can email mick.freer@leasowenwalledgarden.co.uk

COMPETITION

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Dentist Dr Edward Young

Dentist all smiles over nominations

A DENTIST is all smiles after being nominated for two national awards.

Edward Young, who has been treating patients at Ambleside Dental Care in Brierley Hill since 2004 was shortlisted in both the Aesthetic Dentistry Awards and National Dental Awards.

In the first awards held on Friday, the 35-year-old was nominated in the Patient Choice Orthodontics category but lost out in the final.

He is now hoping to achieve success by being voted Young Dentist of the Year in the National Dental Awards. There are North and South cate-

gories and Dr Young is nominated in the North. The final will take place on April 17 in Birmingham.

The father-of-one, who is married to Chrissie, said: "This is the second year running that I have made it into a final. However, I was very proud and honoured to be given another chance to be invited to attend the two ceremonies with highly regarded dental professionals. I wish to thank fellow staff at Ambleside Dental Care as well as family and friends for their support.

"More importantly, I wouldn't have achieved this without my fantastic pa-

tients. My approach to dentistry is to treat the health of the mouth through a prevention, advice and education; and once healthy and stable, it enables a patient to realistically seek cosmetic and structural improvement which is then more likely to last for the longer term.

"I work as a general dentist, with special interests in cosmetic dentistry and orthodontics," he added.

The list of the finalists in both award ceremonies are compiled by a judging panel, consisting of practitioners and also members of various leading dental professional associations.

Major player in drugs racket sent to prison

AN anxious look helped put a major player in a cannabis growing racket behind bars for three and a half years.

Philip Payne stared in such a strange way at two plain clothes police officers as his BMW travelled in the opposite direction past their unmarked car that they turned to follow him, Wolverhampton Crown Court was told.

Mr Mark Phillips, prosecuting, said: "Their attention was drawn by his behaviour. He took a good long look at them as if suspicious of their true identity."

The 23-year-old got struck in traffic while waiting to turn from Pedmore Road, Lye and the unmarked car drew up alongside him, it was said.

Mr Phillips added: "The defendant saw the officers, pulled out on the wrong side of the road and accelerated violently towards oncoming traffic while going round a blind bend. There would have been a head on collision with potentially dire consequences if any vehicle had been coming in the opposite direction."

Pursuit

Police abandoned the chase because of the risk to other road users but one of the officers involved in the aborted pursuit saw Payne come out of the front door while driving past a flat in Stourbridge Road, Lye five days later on February 26, the court heard. The BMW was parked nearby.

Two uniformed officers then approached the defendant who put up a struggle and had to be 'subdued', the court heard.

Mr Phillips said: "Police now knew where he lived and took the front door key to the flat from him."

They found £700 cash and some cannabis inside the property along with an iPhone that had film of cannabis cultivation and text messages that revealed he had links with a number of drug farms.

Mr Phillips concluded: "He was a significant figure in the operation."

Mr Richard Butcher, defending, said: "It is clear that others were involved with him and he had fallen in with bad company."

Payne from Stourbridge Road, Lye admitted dangerous driving and being involved in the production of cannabis.

He was also banned from driving for two years.

TV host plays blinder at brewery



Emann Holmes at the opening of the Sadler's Brewery in Lye with Chris Sadler and Ian King

A BREWERY helping to produce three million pints a year has been expanded – and was launched with the help of broadcaster Eamonn Holmes.

Sadler's in Lye has gone from strength to strength leading bosses to open their second site in Station Drive.

It will run alongside the firm's long-established brewery at the Windsor Castle pub, in Stourbridge Road.

Television presenter Holmes was invited to celebrate the completion

of work on the £500,000 site – and he raised a glass with brewery bosses to mark the occasion. Mr Holmes, who is friends with brewery bosses, chatted with staff and customers who had gathered for the event.

Alongside the brewery, created in a former warehouse, a new upstairs bar has also been created which will open on Fridays and Saturdays. It will also stage festivals, private parties and comedy evenings.

Brewery sales director Ian King

said: "A lot of work has been put into creating the new brewery."

"Everything which is now in the building we have put in. It will work in conjunction with our existing brewery in Stourbridge Road and will allow a significant boost in the amount of beer we can brew annually."

Mr King said the plan was to take more people on in the future.

The brewery is known for creating the Peaky Blinder ale, named after the Birmingham gang which inspired the hit BBC TV series.

Parent gets behind drive for hospital fundraising

A FUNDRAISING drive for a new £1 million hospital centre to support families has been launched by two bereaved parents – one from Dudley.

Naomi Messer, together with Wayne Berridge, from Hinckley, launched the appeal for the new unit at Birmingham Children's Hospital where medical staff can give parents difficult news about their children's condition.

Mrs Messer and her husband John were told there was nothing else that could be done to support their son Noah with his treatment for leukaemia. This news was broken to them on the ward, with only a cubicle curtain for privacy.

Noah, who was a month off his third birthday, had been a patient at Birmingham Children's Hospital since he was 17-months-old and had received multiple operations, including a bone marrow transplant from his older brother Zack, now 14, as well as various courses of radiotherapy and chemotherapy.

Mrs Messer said: "When we were first told the news, we were unsure about where to go within the hospital or who to turn to. It would have made such a huge difference to our family to be able to go to a place away from the ward, to an environment that was completely separate from the hospital itself."

Mr Berridge was given the news that his daughter Jordan's Osteosarcoma cancer was terminal in a small office on the hospital's Oncology Ward. She was 16 and was diagnosed with the cancerous tumour in her bones, in July 2012. She sadly died in April last year.

Canalside homes already in demand

PLOTS are now on sale at a former factory site where 80 homes are being built.

Building work is under way at the old Lloyds metal works, off Brettell Lane, Brierley Hill.

The engineering firm once made propellers during the Second World War before shifting production to heavy duty chains and starter rings. But the firm moved production to India by the start of 2006, leading to the factory being demolished.

Anne Wallace, regional sales and marketing director for Taylor Wimpey, said: "We are delighted, but not surprised, by the high levels of demand we are experiencing for our beautiful new homes at Lockside Walk."

Early prices include three-bedroom houses at £158,995.

Road blocked after two cars in collision

A BUSY road in Dudley was partially blocked following a crash between two cars. Firefighters were called to the Birmingham New Road at around 6.30pm on Friday. No-one was hurt.

One lane was blocked in both directions at the A457 Sedgley Road.

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Shock for resident as car crashes into walls

A CAR left the road and crashed through two brick walls, making a noise 'like an aircraft', according to a neighbour.

A resident who witnessed the crash in New Rowley Road, Dudley, was watching a war documentary in his front room when the BMW people carrier careered off the road at a right hand bend. It demolished a lamp post, two brick walls and a garden fence before coming to a rest on its side in the driveway.

The homeowner, who did not want to be named, said: 'I was in the front room and all of a sudden it has come through like an aircraft and it made me jump.'

He added: 'When he went outside, two passers-by were already tending to the two men in the car, aged in their 50s and 20s, and had helped them from the vehicle. He then called for an ambulance following the crash at 4.30pm last Wednesday, March 25.'

Two ambulances and a paramedic support officer in a rapid response car were sent to the scene.

One of the men suffered a head injury, while the other sustained damage to his back, though neither was seriously hurt and they were taken to Russells Hall Hospital for treatment.

Pensioner Harold Williams was visiting relatives in the road and was sitting in his Corsa when the crash happened on the opposite side of the road sending bricks and debris flying, narrowly missing his car.

He added: 'It was really frightening.'

Radio coverage for Election battle

A NATIONAL radio show is setting up home in Dudley for the General Election.

BBC Radio 4's World At One presenter Shaun Ley will be based in the town - which has two marginal constituencies, Dudley North and Dudley South - throughout the campaign.

Meanwhile, Afzal Amin, who resigned as Tory Prospective candidate for Dudley North has admitted he was 'foolish' for getting involved with the English Defence League, insisting he was the victim of a 'sting operation'.

He said he had resigned 'with a heavy heart and with much regret'.

New candidate, ex-Dudley Council leader Les Jones can still win the key seat, Conservative chief whip Michael Gove said this week in Sedgeley.

Care home lodges plans to increase

A CARE home is planning to expand to ease pressure on Dudley's Russells Hall Hospital.

Wyncroft House in Kingswinford has lodged plans with Dudley Council to expand by nine bedrooms.

Extra staff for register office demand

EXTRA staff are being recruited for Dudley's new register office to cope with an expected soar in demand.

Dudley Council says it has already received 'a great deal of interest' from people interested in holding a ceremony in the Grade II listed building housing Lye and Wollescote Chapels.

The building in Cemetery Road, Lye, which houses identical Anglican and non-conformist chapels, is being converted into a venue for civil ceremonies.

West Midlands Historic Buildings Trust has secured a £1million grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund to carry out the work.

Once complete, the building will be leased to

Dudley Council to be used as a register office. It will have a waiting lobby and two reception areas as well as a wedding ceremony room and an office for staff.

The council is now looking to take on up to three new registration officers to work at Lye and Priory Hall in Dudley.

Dudley Council's strategic director of resources and transformation Philip Tart said: 'Priory Hall is an extremely popular wedding venue and we have already had a great deal of interest from people keen to get married at our new venue in Lye, once it's open. We're not yet taking bookings for Lye but know we need to recruit to fulfil both the existing, and future demand.'

The venue will be used for marriages, citizenship

ceremonies, naming ceremonies, civil partnership ceremonies and for wedding vow renewals.

The building, which dates back to 1787, has been closed for the past 30 years after falling into disrepair. The chapel was used for Anglican and non-conformist purposes when it opened.

The Non-conformist chapel was closed in the 1970s and the Church of England chapel closed following a fire in 1993 which caused minor damage to the inside of the building.

The West Midlands Historic Buildings Trust is a charity dedicated to the conservation of buildings.

Chairman Bob Tolley said: 'We will not just preserve but conserve this amazing building and put it to a sustainable new use.'

NEWS IN BRIEF

Machete attack — arrest made

A MAN has been arrested on suspicion of assault after another man was attacked with a machete in a King'swinford park.

The 25-year-old victim, who has not been named, suffered injuries to his arm during the assault at King George VI Park on Saturday, March 21.

Police said a 23-year-old man from Halesowen had been arrested following investigations. He has been bailed with conditions while enquiries continue.

Anyone with information is asked to call Force CID on the non-emergency 101 number.

Fossil names at town's new estate

PROPOSALS to name roads on a new estate of 43 homes in honour of a nature reserve have been approved.

UK Construction Ltd is building near Dudley's Wrens Nest Nature Reserve, which is famous for its fossils. The developer had proposed the names Fossil View, Calymene Mews and Silurian Mews. Calymene is the genus of trilobites — the famous 'Dudley bug' — while Silurian is the geological age of the rock in which the fossils are found.

Transport boss Councillor Khurshid Ahmed gave the green light.

Photos on show at historic hall

A PHOTOGRAPHIC exhibition is being launched at Himley Hall this weekend.

The Stourbridge Photographic Society will be putting their work from around the world on display at the historic hall.

The exhibition launches on Saturday and will remain at Himley Hall until September.

The photographs will be on display between 2pm and 5pm from Tuesday to Saturday.

Building society sees an increase in profits

THE Tipton & Coseley Building Society recorded increased profits last year despite the UK's ongoing economic challenges in the UK.

Its pre-tax profit figure of £2.75 million was up 7.2 per cent on 2013, and its savings growth grew to £327.36m. Its assets ended the year at £373m.

Richard Newton, the Tipton's chief executive, said it was 'a real achievement amid a continued difficult backdrop'.

Make a big splash

CHILDREN can make a splash with half-term activities in Dudley. Bostin Bruce, an inflatable aqua pool run, with obstacles and slide, will be open from 1.45 to 2.45pm on April 7 and 9 at Dudley Leisure Centre. It is suitable for eight-to-15-year-olds who can swim 25 metres or more and costs £2.80 per child.

Heartless thug created fear with imitation gun

A THUG who pointed an imitation gun at a house while on bail for two robberies has been jailed for six years and one month.

Arun Hudin, from Halesowen, struck first when he mercilessly ignored the pleas of a woman not to steal three gold chains that belonged to her recently deceased mother.

The 22-year-old tore the jewellery from around the neck of the victim and snarled: 'Shut up or you are going to get hurt.' Wolverhampton Crown Court was told.

Miss Joanne Wallbanks, prosecuting, said: 'She had been the main carer of her mother who had died months earlier. She pleaded with the defendant and told him 'they are my mum's and she has just passed away' but that did not bother him.'

Hudin and two other men snatched the ignition key out of a car in which the woman and a male friend were travelling as soon as it came to a standstill outside a parade of shops in New Invention, Willenhall, on May 20 last year.

The woman got out of the vehicle and tried to get away but he chased her and grabbed the chains, said Miss Wallbanks. He also took £35 cash from the man in the car.

Hudin had been released on bail pending further inquiries when he got into an argument in Whitegates Road, Coseley, on July 21.

Mini-moto

The dispute stemmed from him riding a mini-moto bike. Hudin returned to the scene four hours later after getting an imitation firearm from his home.

Miss Wallbanks added: 'He stood outside the home of the person involved in the earlier confrontation, pulled out the black handgun, went through the motion of cocking it and pointed it at one of the windows. Those inside feared that it might be fired.'

Mr Dean Kershaw, defending, said: 'There had been trouble before with this group of boys and he wanted to show that enough was enough.' The lawyer said the weapon had been a BB gun.

Hudin from Masters Lane, Halesowen, was found guilty of the two robberies at trial after denying the offences but admitted possession of an imitation firearm.

Judge Amjad Nawaz told him he was responsible for 'nasty robberies' and had created 'considerable fear' with the imitation firearm.

Action call over speeding traffic



Back, Vivienne North, John Chapple, Tony North. Front, Sylvia Bell, Lyn Jones and Robert Skidmore

COUNCILLORS say improvements will be made to a busy road in Sedgley following calls from residents. Campaigners had demanded action over speeding cars and heavy lorries in Northway.

More than 50 people attended a public meeting and called for safety measures, including a weight limit. The Northway Action Group for Road Safety say heavy goods vehicles have been more frequent during building

work for a housing estate in Gospel End. They also asked for a new pedestrian crossing at The Precinct and for action to ease traffic building up around Alder Coppice Primary School.

In a survey of 124 residents, 83 per cent expressed concern about the speeds. They also supported the installation of safety cameras.

Group spokesman Tony North, said: 'The road is not suited to heavy commercial traffic; it is

hilly, winding and residential in nature. It also serves a popular nursery and primary school.'

Dudley Council's acting strategic director, John Millar, said: 'There are plans for a mini roundabout and a pedestrian refuge, as well as resurfacing near Alder Coppice school.'

'We are also proposing to introduce a safer routes to school scheme along The Northway which will include a 20mph zone.'

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A DUDLEY wedding venue has become the first in the West Midlands to broadcast ceremonies online.

Couples can 'webcast' their service at Priory Hall so people who may not be able to make it can watch via the internet.

Ceremonies at the Grade II listed building can also be recorded onto DVD.

Philip Tart, strategic director for transformation, said: "This is a great facility. By using the cameras at Priory Hall no one has to miss out."

There is a charge of £65 to broadcast a ceremony or have a DVD, or £75 for both.

Meanwhile, brides-to-be are invited to a wedding fair at Priory Hall next Thursday, April 9.

The girls-only event takes place from 5-7pm.

Rugby trio star at club's lunch

THERE will be a trio of rugby union stars at Stourbridge RFC's May lunch.

Former England and British Lions winger John Bentley will be master of ceremonies at the £90-a-head event on Friday, May 8.

Also speaking will be Wales record try scorer Shane Williams and former England captain Martin Corry.

Guests will be treated to a four-course meal. The event, being held in a marquee at the club's Stourton ground, will also feature comedy from Andy White of Birmingham.

Former publican overcome by fumes

AN ex-publican died after being overwhelmed by fumes from a fire sparked by food left unattended on a cooker, a coroner has ruled.

Martine Higginson, aged 43, was found dead at her home in Wells Court, St John's Street, Netherton, on December 9.

Her family had been unable to contact her during the day and broke down a door at her flat to gain access.

Miss Higginson's sister, Peppa, kicked the door open and entered the flat using her mobile phone for light.

Her sister had been found in the living room, paramedics were called but it was too late to save her.

A report by fire investigation officer Sean Tomkins said the evidence showed Miss Higginson's death had been a tragic accident.

Miss Higginson ran the Yew Tree Pub in the town for a time.

The hearing was told her family said they were concerned a smoke alarm in her hallway had failed to go off but when tested by fire investigators the alarm was found to be working. There was no evidence of an electrical fault at the property.

Senior Black Country coroner Mr Zafar Siddique said the medical cause of death was respiratory injuries and carbon monoxide poisoning. She was found to have no burns. He gave a conclusion of accidental death.

FIRKINS has ceased trading with the closure of 23 shops and loss of 104 jobs.

The 144-year-old Black Country bakery firm, which has had a troubled history in recent years, is in liquidation following 'difficult trading periods on the high street'.

Shocked staff were phoned at home on Sunday and told not to come to work this week.

Both Firkins and Wollaston bakeries have closed down.

Firkins have been axed in Halesowen Road, Netherton; New Street, Dudley; High Street, Lye and Princes End, Tipton. Wollastons have gone in Dudley High Street, Stourbridge High Street and Bridgnorth Road, Wollaston.

Difficult

BRI, a Northampton-based business recovery and insolvency specialist, is now dealing with the situation. Firkins has been in and out of administration at least three times since 2000.

A statement from BRI read: "Following difficult trading periods on the high street, Newbridge Bakery (Retail) Ltd & Newbridge Bakery (Birmingham Retail) Ltd have announced that their shops trading as Firkins and Wollaston Bakery have closed and will cease to trade."

One staff member, who asked not to be named, said: "This could have been handled a lot better."

"Some of those who have lost their jobs have been working for the firm for 20 years and this is the thanks they get."

"They get a phone call at home saying it's all over after showing a long-term commitment to the firm."

"There were no staff meetings and no official warnings before we got that bombshell phone call on a Sunday morning."

Dudley councillor Ken Finch said: "It is a disaster for a firm that has been around Dudley town centre for many years."

"I feel sorry for those who have been made redundant. Something has to be done to help these smaller firms."

"What a shattering blow when families have got mortgages and young couples are in their first homes."

Scuba club dive in to clean up reservoir



Dudley Dolphins Scarlett Morris, Cathy Kingcome, Laura Mason, Mandy Downing, Robert Meacham and Robin Turner

A SCUBA diving club is preparing to carry out an underwater litter pick to help safeguard nature at a beauty spot.

Members of Dudley Dolphin Sub-Aqua Club will be collecting debris from the bottom of Netherton Reservoir.

It is a site where they regularly dive and while active members will be gathering rubbish from up to 15 metres

below the surface, friends and family will be doing the same along the banks of the reservoir. The dive will be taking place at the Lodge Farm reservoir, off Highbridge Road, on April 26.

Welfare officer Mandy Downing, aged 48, said: "We all use the water so we should all do our bit to maintain it and keep it as nice as we can for as long as possible. The bits of rubbish are mainly round the edges, as the

area is popular with the local community for fishing and walking. Unfortunately there is an inevitable amount of litter that comes with human visitors."

"It's mainly tins and bottles and cans but there is the odd shopping trolley too. We're hoping we'll be able to recycle what we pull out."

The Dudley Dolphin club, established in 1964, has around 40 members. See www.dudleydolphin.org.uk

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Top Gear gone and nothing to tune in for

IT'S time to put the Clarkson debate to bed. If you punch a colleague at work, you can expect to get the sack, no matter how talented you might be. And as for those 'concerned members of the public' who made official complaints to police after reading about it in the newspaper, you really need to find something more productive to do with your time. Like writing poison-pen letters to Points of View. In green ink.

However, Clarkson's sacking does raise a serious issue. Since Top Gear has been dropped, there has been nothing at all on mainstream television which I have any desire to watch. Not a thing.

OK, I still watch the news. And there are some decent repeats on some of the more obscure digital channels – mainly Top Gear now you mention it. And if they ever get round to bringing back The Apprentice, I will probably watch that. Soap operas, period dramas, singing and dancing contests, sorry it's just moving wallpaper. And then on Saturday night Channel 4 came up with what is surely one of the most yawn-inspiring ideas yet, a political drama about the talks leading up to the formation of the present coalition government. What next? Live paint drying?

Of course, people have different tastes, and just because I don't enjoy those programmes doesn't mean that other people should be denied the chance to watch them. But given that the BBC makes so much fuss about how it caters for the broadest possible audience, isn't something wrong that a pretty average Joe like myself can't find a single programme to watch?

Given that the broadcasters are already excluding certain sections of the population, what exactly is the licence fee for?

□□□□□

HERE is something I doubt we will be hearing much about from any of the major politicians over the next few weeks. Over the course of the past three years the Department of Food and Rural Affairs has spent a pretty tasty £420,000 of taxpayers' money killing 88 ducks because their feathers were the wrong colour.

Not that this is a purely coalition extermination programme it should be stressed. The decision to begin exterminating American ruddy ducks actually began in 2003, and between 2006 and 2011 successive administrations managed to wipe out 4,400 of these birds, which are said to threaten the existence of the European white-headed duck. It seems that governments of all colours are united that all ducks in Europe should be the same colour.

It seems that our feathered friends seem to rear their differently coloured heads every time there is an election on. Last time it was duckhouses, this time it's duck eradication programmes.



Concentrating – Jordan Edwards, 18, from Willenhall



Eyes down at the League of Legends challenge



Competing – 17 year old Callum Fellows

Game on! Students are in league of own

In training for months, these college teams are in an epic battle for dominance, as JORDAN HARRIS explains

IT'S an epic battle for dominance. A war to be crowned the best of the best.

No, it's not the latest Call of Duty release, but a bid by students in Wolverhampton to triumph in the Student Gaming Championship.

They have been in training for months, honing their skills ready to unleash on those who dare to challenge them in the championship and have already passed the first hurdle, beating their initial rivals in a 70-minute battle of wits and skill.

Strategic

As part of the challenge, a total of 10 students, who are studying for Level 2 and 3 qualifications in games design at the City of Wolverhampton College's Paget Road campus, make up two teams and battle it out against competitors from schools, colleges and universities across the country in a fast-paced game of League of Legends.

The teams go head-to-head in a multi-player online battle arena and have to combine strategic thinking skills and lightning reflexes with co-ordinated play in small-scale skirmishes and intense battles as they seek to destroy their enemies' nexus before their own is destroyed.

League of Legends is accredited with being the largest and most popular online game with more than 15 million players worldwide and around 1.4 million players logging in every day.

The City of Wolverhampton College team



Keeping a close eye on game progress – Matthew Cullwick, 17

beat their first foes in a 70-minute epic.

Adam Cross, lecturer in computer games development at the college said: "Taking part in this kind of event takes communication and team work to a different level as players will have to react quickly and adapt as a team to be successful."

"The students are really excited to be taking part and, in preparation, have been devising strategies and organising team building activities and practice sessions to give them the best chance of success on the day."

"Our first match was a close game but I think the practice we had gave us the advantage. We are waiting to hear about the date of the next fixture."

"Now that the first game is done, the team is planning to put in some more practise as we expect the competition to get more challenging."

Applied science student Callum Fellows says the formation of this team has given him a chance to socialise with like minded people while having fun.

He said: "The game is one of the best that is currently out there and it is great fun to watch these guys play against teams from around the country."

"The skills you can get from gaming are applicable in other fields of life, the team work aspect and the ability to analyse decisions you have made with others during a game, go back and look at them again and see where you went wrong."

Game design student Jordan Edwards, 18, from Willenhall, said the competition directly benefits his studies.

He said: "League of Legends is an absolutely huge game that is growing all the time."

"For someone who studies the making of games and the work behind them, it is amazing to see what the developers have done."

"We have to work on the technical side of things all the time, as well as creating stories, scenarios and basically this whole world our game will live inside, so studying something which has had this much success is a real lesson."

Social

Outside of the work-related benefits, Mr Cross believes the tournament is an opportunity for the group to socialise and make new friends.

During a practice session ahead of their first competitive match, the team banter with each other over character choices, previous bad games and skill levels.

He said: "There is a social level to all of this that people sometimes don't understand."

"When the team is competing against others or even one another, they are cracking jokes, making friends and socialising."

"Sometimes the focus gaming students have on their studies, which also happen to be their favourite hobby, can be mistaken for a communication issue."

"This team shows we have a strong community here."

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Outdated administrative boundaries

THE proposals for a proposed Black Country & Birmingham Combined Authority are the latest in a long line of Westminster and Whitehall driven ideas geared to giving the impression of devolving powers while they continue unchanged in their own way – taking credit when things go right and pointing the blame at the local when they go wrong.

There is no real drive by Westminster and Whitehall to give up powers and ultimate control over the local. Despite real devolution outside England we have had no change in West-

minster. The funding which might be available to a Black Country and Birmingham Authority would be minuscule compared to the level of reductions in public expenditure since 2010. The level and allocation of funds would be subject to the agreement of Westminster and Whitehall. The majority of our local elected representatives would have even less say and influence on priorities than they do at present.

A West Midlands Combined Authority based on the Black Country and Birmingham authorities with or without Solihull and Coventry based on their shared interests.

G MORRAN, Dudley

MPs work hard for the people

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

POST

Dudley Chronicle,
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EMAIL

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Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

Is it now time to say enough is enough?

NOT too long ago this nation ruled the waves, we had the finest armed forces, we could defend ourselves, we were the envy of the world, we had a mining industry, we had steel plants, we had the best police, the NHS was second to none, education was the best, we had a car industry, our utilities were publicly owned as were the railways, most people had employment and it was even easy to change jobs.

Now we do not have a navy to talk about, our armed forces would not fill Wembley stadium, there is no mining industry, no steel plants, police forces with ever decreasing staff, our NHS is in crisis, our education system is in question, no car industry of our own, the utility companies now rake in massive profits and we see no benefits, the railways are a disgrace, the job situation offers are one of zero hours and below the minimum wage in most cases.

After losing all of these the banks brought about a crisis not of our making, they have not been punished but instead they decide to make us, the innocents, suffer. Is it not now time to tell politicians enough is enough?

To quote Abraham Lincoln, "You can fool all the people some of the time, and some of the people all the time, but you cannot fool all of the people all of the time."

P LOWE, Brierley Hill

ALMOST everything I read in the press about MP's is critical. They are often portrayed as money-grabbing and self-interested but in my experience they work hard for their local communities and constituents.

In my case, I had problems with a mobile phone company. I had tried to resolve it for months. The company ignored all my calls and letters, even when I tried to report the issues to the chief executive. The regulator was of no use and I was getting increasingly frustrated and concerned.

I was not sure if he could help, but I contacted my MP Chris Kelly. He immediately took the matter up with the company, and got a response from them, something I had been completely unable to do.

The whole matter was resolved in my favour. We should be pleased that we have such outstanding people to represent and help us.

B KEMP
Kingswinford

Why Laurel & Hardy not on TV?

HERE'S a question. How come we never see Laurel & Hardy on TV?

There will be folk, who'll say, "they were funny in your childhood but they wouldn't appeal to today's seven-year-olds".

I wouldn't expect today's seven-year-olds to bop around to Roy Orbison, Del Shannon or the Beatles, but these two comedy greats emerged from the silent era from which the visual art is what movies were built on.

Why can't a place be found for some of these generally, 20 minute 'shorts, their universal appeal, would be a joy to children of all ages.

One last more topical point, I believe 'the boys' along with Chico Marx appeared at Dudley's Hippodrome. How sad will it be, if it goes the wrong way, when our seven-year-old is now 17 and after reading an article about Dudley's ever decreasing past asks, "Dad, what was the Hippodrome?"

STEVE FORD
Kingswinford

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Greetings from Igglepiggle

COMPETITION

Igglepiggle is just the ticket for youngsters

THE summer classic for children, In The Night Garden Live, will be delighting youngsters and their parents at Birmingham's Canolf Hill Park from July 11-25, as part of a UK tour.

Nine out of 10 parents give the staged event of the BAFTA award-winning CBeebies children's TV show five out of five stars, according to audience surveys and parents' reviews on NightGardenLive.com.

And you could be at this amazing musical theatre experience for all the family. The organisers have teamed up with the Chronicle series to offers readers the chance to win three Meet the Cast and Characters family tickets and three runner-up show-only family tickets (Family ticket is for four people, minimum one adult).

Children's favourite CBeebies' stars,

Igglepiggle, Upsy Daisy, Makka Pakka and friends, are all brought beautifully to life on stage using full-size costumes, magical puppets, enchanting music and breathtaking projections.

The show takes place in its own all-weather, purpose-built inflatable showdome with many family-friendly facilities. This site-specific structure is a huge hit with children and parents and its immersive theatrical experience makes audiences feel they are actually entering the magical world of the TV show In The Night Garden.

Andrew Collier, Creative Director of Minor Entertainment said: "Parents tell us that children as young as a few months old engage with the live show, and the looks on the faces of the children and parents in the audiences are absolutely amazing."



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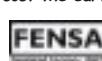
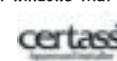


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Goal should be to achieve as an MP

DANIEL WAINWRIGHT
Political Editor

IT won't be Paxo who stuffs the Tories in the General Election – it will be their own candidates and MPs.

David Cameron came across as irritable while Jeremy Paxman gave him a roasting in the first of the televised leaders' interviews.

But the polls continue to suggest he's something of an asset to the Conservatives. That is more than can be said for Afzal Amin, who has resigned as candidate for Dudley North after meeting with the English Defence League and discussing the 'fantasy' of arranging a march, then calling it off.

His emergency replacement, Les Jones, was chosen at a hastily-convened meeting of the constituency association. The former council leader was the only name anyone wanted.

March

Anne Millward, also a former council leader as well as chairman of the Conservative association in Dudley North, said she did not want a candidate from outside 'foisted' on the party.

The only hope the Tories have of making up their lost ground is to have someone who knows everything there is know about the patch.

Afzal Amin had two years to get to know it. And he was from Smethwick originally anyway, not a million miles away. He maintained his actions in meeting with the EDL were all in the best interests of people in Dudley.

But after the last march cost hundreds of thousands in policing and



Afzal Amin – resigned



Aiden Burley – retiring

stirred up a lot of anger and resentment it is hard to see how any attempt to work with the far right group could have been in the interests of anyone bar the individual candidate.

The retiring Tory MP Aiden Burley has also not helped his party hold on to Cannock Chase by taking a swipe at his 'rude' constituents either.

There is an issue that all parties must address, but after this week it is especially urgent for the Tories, and that is the reason their candidates are standing at all. No-one could have expected that Afzal Amin would do something like that. But it looks as though he was prepared to do a deal to become an MP.

Aiden Burley, meanwhile, says that when he campaigned in 2010 he had 'not expected to win the seat'.

This was probably just very

self-deprecating of him. Even so, it did make me think about others standing this time around.

If a candidate is not expecting to win the why are they going for it in the first place?

If they are just there for the sake of the party saving face and having a name on the ballot paper it lets down the people who lend it their votes.

There will be cases of candidates parachuted into constituencies with little or no knowledge of the area.

Some work hard to get to know those constituencies and become adopted as locals. Others see their voters as little more than a springboard to Westminster.

The goal for them must be to achieve something in Parliament. Getting into Parliament is not and must never be the goal in itself.

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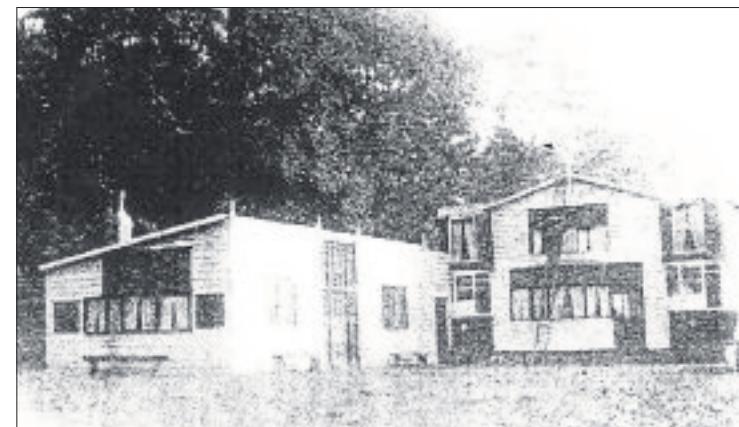
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Ironbridge undertaker Bill Williams with the tramcar building in 1974



One of the trams is lifted clear



The trams are part of the Coalbrookdale property on the right

Coffin shop tramcars have new lease of life at Black Country museum

IT'S a tram-endous story with a happy ending. When two Wolverhampton trams were taken out of service in the 1920s they were snapped up and brought to the Ironbridge Gorge to be incorporated into a house which stood for many years.

And when the time came in 1976 to demolish that house in Coalbrookdale, the trams were both salvaged to be used as museum pieces.

One of them was restored to be run on tracks visiting visitors around the Black Country Living Museum in Dudley, where it remains an exhibit today and will run again soon.

The property mentioned had once been the home of Bill Williams.

Dave Bentley of Admaston whose wife is

MEMORY LANE

Report by Toby Neal

related to the Williams family, said: "Mrs Williams was my mother-in-law's auntie. Bill Williams was the undertaker down the bottom of Ironbridge. The trams were sent to the Black Country Museum and done up," he said.

Crane

And Dave was able to give the date that the trams were removed – June 23, 1976.

The Shropshire Star reported on that day: "Overhead wires had to be taken down in Coalbrookdale today to allow a massive lifting operation to get under way. The telephone wire was taken down so that a mobile crane could lift two old trams which

have been used as an undertaker's home

and coffin shop since 1925. The 26ft long trams – which originally weighed about 13 tons each – were being lifted on to two low loaders for transport to the Black Country Museum storage building at Pensnett trading estate. There they will be made into a single machine to run on tracks at the museum site in Dudley.

"The trams were being removed from Mr Bill Williams' premises. His father-in-law, Mr Edwin Brown, bought them when they went out of service after 20 years' use, and built a house using them as gable ends. Mr Williams later used the building as a coffin shop."

Laura Wakelin of the Black Country Living Museum added: "Both trams were used as public trams on the Penn Fields route, Wolverhampton, during the few years preceding the First World War.

"Once withdrawn from service they were sold to Mr Edwin Brown of Ironbridge and

eventually used to form part of his undertaker's home and coffin shop in 1925.

"Both trams came to the museum in 1976. Tram 49 was subsequently restored with a lot of funding from the Science Museum, London. Tram 49 is on display in the museum's Albion Tram Depot which is open to the public on every museum opening day.

"Tram 49 has run on the museum's tram tracks and it will continue to do so as soon as some necessary essential maintenance has been carried out on the tracks.

"Unfortunately upon arriving at the museum tram 47 was in a state of disrepair and the decision was taken that it would be more useful to sacrifice it for spares."

It is not the only time the museum has received trams in this way. In 1984 two old trams which were used as part of a bungalow in County Lane, Codsall Wood, were donated to the museum.



Tram 49 – restored and gleaming at the museum

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Meet the Team



Michael Jordan LLB

Michael has been with the firm since 2006 when he joined as a trainee. He is now Managing Director specialising in Residential and Commercial Property.



Baldeep Kooner LLB

Baldeep is a Wills and Probate Specialist advising on Wills, Probate, Powers of Attorney, Tax Planning and Court of Protection cases.



Brinder Khara LLB

Brinder is an Accredited Family Solicitor and has been practising in the area of Family Law since 1996. She is also a Notary Public.

Recent additions to the team include Rikki Bateman and Emma Hingley. Rikki is a Qualified Solicitor specialising in Residential Property. He is vastly experienced in all aspects of buying and selling, including New Builds and Help to Buy Schemes. Emma has joined us from a local Estate Agents. She brings a wealth of experience, which will further improve the process of Buying or Selling a property for our clients and make it a smoother and less stressful process.

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College pledges to offer support in spite of cuts

DUDLEY College bosses have vowed to support adult learners despite being forced to cut the number of course places available.

The college will have around 1,000 fewer places available to adult learners on certain courses after a £1.4 million drop in Government funding.

College bosses say up to 30 jobs may be at risk of redundancy due to the fewer places available for adult learners.

The cuts come from the Government's Skills Funding Agency for the courses the college provides.

Health and social care courses as well as early years training delivered in the workplace, like care homes and nurseries for employees, are among the courses affected. Others are giving skills to help people referred to the college from Job Centres and the prison service.

Economy

Principal Lowell Williams said the council had been forced to make 'difficult choices' but said it would continue to work to support adult learners.

He also hit out at the cuts in funding saying it was the local economy that would feel the impact of a potential skills shortage.

'I'm not sure the funding agency will see the true impact of its cuts as it has no direct contact with those adult learners we'll be forced to turn away in

August because there's no money to support their learning,' he said.

'Two years ago when funding was reduced for level 3 qualifications, an introduction of 24+ Advance Learning Loans offered students the choice to continue studying.'

'Regrettably, a similar loan option hasn't been introduced during this budget reduction, even though the cuts will affect a larger number of learners.'

'We are currently looking at ways to support adult learners through other funding options,' Mr Williams added.

A 30-day consultation is under way for staff informed of job losses. After this staff will be advised of their options once the funding cuts hit at the start of August.

Officials say the cuts come despite the college's financial health remaining 'strong'.

Mrs Baker is a student at the dance

studio and knows Mark and Olga Elsbury, the couple who run it, and have lent the facility to the golf club for the charity activities.

Margaret Baker, who runs Himmey Hall Golf Club with her husband Desmond, is holding weekly dance and exercise sessions at Crystal Dance Studios in Cleveland Street, Dudley, in aid of Breakthrough Breast Cancer.

Mrs Baker is a student at the dance

studio and knows Mark and Olga Elsbury, the couple who run it, and have lent the facility to the golf club for the charity activities.

As well as the weekly classes, there will also be a football match at the Dell Stadium in Dudley on August 2 between dancers and golfers, while on August 8 there will be a concert at the golf club and fundraisers will

be scaling Ben Nevis on August 14. Mrs Baker said she had chosen Breakthrough Breast Cancer as she had lost friends and relatives to the disease.

She added over the last three weeks £300 had been raised by the fundraising sessions.

Two years ago, the golf club raised £4,000 for the fight against children's cancer by holding similar events.

Golf club set for dancing fundraiser



Organiser Margaret Baker, with, front, Nicky Horne and, centre, Ella Harrison, aged nine, from Tipton

NEWS IN BRIEF

Smart move is just the ticket

A SMART card system is to be extended across the West Midlands rail network, the Government has announced.

The Swift card will be rolled out across the region as part of a £620,000 government investment over the next two years.

Passengers will be able to use the smart cards at the redeveloped Birmingham New Street from September.

The expansion for smart ticketing, which is currently used on buses, was announced by Transport Minister Baroness Kramer.

Swift is currently accepted on 10 different bus operators covering approximately 100 routes across the West Midlands.

Centro chairman Councillor John McNicholas said: 'I am delighted that our smart ticketing programme is to receive such a boost.'

Speaker's link to Charles Dickens

A GROUP celebrating the history of the Black Country will welcome a descendant of Charles Dickens.

The Black Country Society lecture is at the Black Country Living Museum on April 22 at 7.30pm, when the speaker is Lucinda Hawksley, great great granddaughter of Dickens, who has just completed a lecture tour of America.

He will reveal how his books changed Victorian society. Admission is £2. See www.blackcountryhistory.co.uk

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July festival to honour strikers

A FESTIVAL will celebrate a group of Black Country women's ground-breaking industrial victory.

The event in Cradley Heath will bring to life the victory of the women chainmakers of Cradley Heath through drama, dance, poetry and performance.

The 1910 Women Chainmakers' strike, led by Mary Macarthur and supported by the women of Cradley Heath, was pivotal in labour history. It saw hundreds of low-paid women win the dispute, which in turn laid the foundations for today's national minimum wage.

A statue of the campaigner now stands in Mary Macarthur Gardens in the town.

The event will take place in Cradley Heath High Street on Sunday, July 12, from 11am to 6pm.

Previous events have seen Tony Benn once addressing the crowds and singer-songwriter Billy Bragg performing.

Lewis acting up for drama role



Lewis Hughes, of Halesowen College, is in the production
A DRAMA student is taking a starring role in a new film highlighting the dangers of sexual exploitation.

The film called Anybody's Child had its official red carpet premiere at the Showcase Cinema, Dudley.

Halesowen College drama student Lewis Hughes is acting in the production which is an educational film informing families and young people of the signs of sexual exploitation.

It has been sent to every school in the UK and was produced by ChatBack Productions.

The film follows the character of 14-year-old Charlie Owen who gets exploited by her older boyfriend Dan Harris, played by Lewis.

Lewis said: "I loved every second of making the film but portraying the character of Dan was terrifying. I hated the character and it opened by eyes."

Kurt Cook, Drama Lecturer at Halesowen College, said: "Lewis is studying A level drama at College and it is great to see him putting his skills to the test."

HSBC is to relocate 1,000 jobs to Brum

INTERNATIONAL banking giant HSBC is moving 1,000 jobs from London to Birmingham as its sets up the new head office for its UK banking business.

The world's second largest bank is taking a 250-year lease on a new 210,000 sq ft office block that will be built as part of the £400 million Arena Central development in the city centre. The legal documents are due to be signed in the next few days with work starting on the site in June.

HSBC says it will start moving jobs from its base in Canary Wharf to Birmingham in 2017.

The operation being moved to the West Midlands is its 'ring-fenced' British retail and commercial banking business.

New regulations that come into force in 2019 mean all the UK's big banks have to split their ordinary banking operations from their riskier investment banking, to protect taxpayers from having to bail out the banks again.

New era for health as urgent care centre opens at hospital

A NEW urgent care centre was set to officially open its doors at Russells Halls Hospital in Dudley this week.

The facility was opening yesterday (Wednesday), replacing the walk-in centre at Holly Hall and marking the start of a new era for healthcare in the borough.

It has been designed to take the pressure off the busy A&E and Dr Joanne Taylor, medical service head for the emergency department, said: "The urgent care centre will be a single place for patients with urgent or emergency medical needs to be seen and treated by the most appropriate professional."

All patients needing urgent treatment will ar-

rive at the hospital through the emergency department. They will be assessed by a nurse who will decide whether they need to go to the urgent care centre or the emergency department.

If their condition is not believed to be urgent, they may be referred to their GP.

Bites

Health chiefs say this takes the decision making out of patients' hands and should reduce the number of people being treated in A&E who do not need to be there.

The urgent care centre has four consulting rooms and will treat patients with minor illnesses and injuries that need urgent attention such as minor burns and bites, fever and

raised temperatures, mild breathing difficulties and cuts and scrapes. It has been operating on a trial basis between 10am and 10pm for the past month. During that time, doctors and nurses have seen on average 40 to 50 patients a day. But they expect the number to increase to more than 100 when the centre is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Dr Nabell Malik, from Malling Health, which has been awarded a five-year £18million contract, said: "We're working closely with the emergency department to make sure patients are seen in the right place.

"The aim is to remove the decision making from the patient which means we can make sure patients are in the right place."

Easter events at attraction

FUN activities will be taking place at a Shropshire beauty spot during the Easter school holidays.

Severn Valley Country Park, near Bridgnorth, is holding a host of events daily from 11am to 5pm.

A trail has been laid by the park rangers for youngsters to see if they can find the characters from The Snow Queen. Maps cost £2.

On Wednesday, April 8 children can make clay collages to decorate Ethelflaed's well.

There will also be a geocache Easter egg hunts on April 10. Working in teams, visitors will be able to use a handheld GPS unit to navigate around the park to search for treasure chests. There are two sessions.

Events at the park near Alveley are £3.50 per child. Call 01746 781 192.

Independent Family Owned Funeral Directors



About The Company

Trevor E W Hickton Funeral Directors are a long established firm based in Cradley Heath. Formerly known as J.E.W. Hickton & Sons the company was established in 1909 and has been serving Cradley Heath, Halesowen and all the surrounding towns and areas since. In 1909 Joe Hickton a well known carpenter, builder, undertaker, local counsellor and one time Mayor of Rowley Regis, opened a dedicated funeral home located in Lower High Street, Cradley Heath to focus on the funeral directing side of business. Along with his wife Rose, the local midwife. They became a large part of the local community, with the local saying being "she brings them in to the world, and he takes them out!" Their son William 'Bill' Hickton came in to the business in 1937 and the father and son partnership began carrying out funerals across Cradley Heath and the surrounding areas, with Bill eventually taking over the business in 1957 after Joe retired. Bill's son Trevor came in to the business in 1971 working closely with his father to continue building the company reputation.

Trevor inherited J. E. W. Hickton Funeral Directors after his father Bill passed away in 2000. In 2005 the company was registered as a Limited UK company along with a name change to what it is today, Trevor E.W. Hickton Ltd Funeral Directors. Trevor's son Ross came in to the business in 2006, followed by his other son Greg in 2010 and finally by his daughter Jodie in 2014.

The family all work together along with a team of long standing and hard working staff. The office staff comprise of former Springfield Post Office manager Mandy Parsons, who looks after the on going funeral arrangements assisted by Jodie, and Kate Davis who has worked for the company for 15 years. Kate is also the company Stone Masonry manager.

In 2014 a brand new dedicated funeral home was built on the grounds of the original funeral home in Lower High Street, to support the needs of the business. Now with three private chapels of rest, three family arrangement rooms and a private working office. The company is able to cater to all needs and requirements of their clients in a friendly and inviting funeral home.

In late 2008 the company took over ownership of Richard Hadley Funeral Services in Colley Gate, Halesowen. Elaine and Anne continued on in their roles of working in the office supporting the families and local area.

In 2015 the decision was made to renovate the funeral home in Colley Gate with a new reception area and particularly a new shop frontage. The office name was changed to incorporate the Hickton name as many local families were using the office who had before come to Hicktons in Cradley Heath at their time of need, they now have a closer location.

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Elaine Askins



New Office Frontage at Colley Gate



New Reception Area at Colley Gate

Birmingham Dogs' Home has a long and notable history in the care and protection of rescuing strays from the city streets of Birmingham and surrounding towns and villages in the West Midlands.

It was founded in 1892 on land that was made available by the late Sir Alfred Gooch Bart in New Canal Street, Birmingham, and proudly displayed the heading 'Birmingham Home for Lost and Starving Dogs' above its doors, a sign that is still present on the building, having been restored by its current owners.

Almost 100 years later - in 1987 - the Duchess of York officially opened the New Bartholomew Street home, which had been purpose-built to provide shelter and protection for over 150 abandoned dogs in comfortable kennel blocks with adjacent facilities, such as its own vets' clinic, puppy unit and isolation block.

The home is a charity which can only survive through the generosity and support of the general public and

benefactors from the local community. Without this we would be unable to carry on the vital work of rescuing and rehoming abandoned dogs.

Rescued

We at Birmingham Dogs' Home are here primarily to ensure that the abandoned dogs coming into our care are rescued from their plight, reunited with owners who may have lost them or rehomed to families that will respect and nurture them.

Our **rehoming procedure** is designed and operated principally to be both practical and fair. It takes into consideration the high number of dogs brought into our homes on a daily and weekly basis as well as our desire to find the best possible home for each individual dog in our care.

The public are free to walk around our homes to view our dogs at any time during our opening hours of Monday to Saturday 11am - 4.45pm, but they should be aware that not all dogs are available for rehoming. Some are stray dogs due to be claimed by their owners while others are under assessment by our staff for either medical or behavioural concerns.

Once you have spent time with one of our dogs and are satisfied that you would like to offer the dog a home, our rehoming staff will take you through the various stages required to complete the process. No pressure is placed on anyone to offer a dog a home. We do stress, however, to anyone considering this option that they must take as much time necessary before deciding to reserve a dog in our care.

Abandoned

Your help brings hope and happy tomorrows for abandoned dogs

Fundraising is the life's blood of Birmingham Dogs' Home. Without it we simply could not exist.

With no Government funding, we survive purely through the generous contributions of the general public, interested companies, groups, organisations and kind-hearted individuals who may or may not have purchased dogs from us and have remembered us in their Wills.

Legacies and other contributions are valued beyond compare and allow us to carry on providing care and protection for unwanted dogs.

This ensures that we can continue to rescue these unfortunate animals, oversee their welfare and good health and treat any conditions with first class veterinary attention all with one aim in mind ... to see them happily rehomed to loving new families.

Our highly trained kennel team do the rest with loving pastoral care prior to their four-legged charges leaving for pastures new.

There are various fundraising routes available for those who wish to donate. Whichever, we at Birmingham Dogs' Home are deeply indebted to those of you who work so tirelessly to help us help them ...



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Tennis club takes advantage of auction to snap up iconic dress



Fiona Walker, the woman in the famous tennis Athena poster



Poster girl Fiona, of Stourbridge, with a copy of the iconic image

A MYSTERY buyer who snapped up the white tennis dress worn in the iconic Athena tennis girl poster for more than £15,000 has been revealed.

Model Fiona Walker, from Stourbridge, was the young lady in the saucy shot depicting a player cheekily hitching up her skirt.

And now it has emerged the dress worn in the well-known image was purchased by the museum at Wimbledon at auction last year.

Report by Lee Watton

The All-England Tennis Club paid £15,500 last July for both the dress and racket made famous in the 1970s poster, but at the time chose to keep its identity a secret.

But the home of tennis, at SW19, has now unveiled the handmade dress as an exhibit and invited Carol Knott, who made the outfit all those years ago, along as a guest of honour.

Officials at the club were forced to apologise recently after using the image to advertise its powerful poster event at Wimbledon Lawn Tennis Museum.

It prompted a volley of criticism and claims of sexism on social media after the club tweeted a photo of the iconic poster.

Thrilled

Although the tweet was taken down, officials said the image would still form part of the exhibition. Carol, who lives in Gloucestershire and is a personal injury and clinical negligence barrister, said she was thrilled the club purchased the dress.

"It could have gone to anyone, private collectors, celebrities, who knows?" she said.

"But I am so pleased Wimbledon considered it important enough to feature in their museum so it can be enjoyed by everyone."

As a teenager, Carol played tennis at her local club in Stourbridge and made the dress from a pattern.

One day her friend Fiona asked to borrow the dress and the racket for a photo shoot with then-boyfriend Martin Elliott.

Mr Elliott, who died in 2010, sold the image rights to Athena and the poster went on to sell more than two million copies. Carol said before last year's auction, held at Fieldings Auctioneers, in Stourbridge, she had the dress tucked away in a cupboard at her home.

"When I first thought about selling it a few years ago I did think about offering it to the Wimbledon museum but I really didn't think they would be interested."

"I can't quite believe that the dress I used to wear to play tennis in will now be part of the Wimbledon Museum collection. It's incredible."

The dress was sold on the day of the Wimbledon ladies' singles final last July between Petra Kvitova and Eugenie Bouchard, and at the time was expected to make between £1,000 and £2,000.

But bids flooded in for the piece of poster history – including one as far away as New Zealand.

Bidders battled it out in person, over the phone and on the internet as they tried to secure the dress.

Carol was called to the bar in 1996.

Fiona Walker, from Oldswinford, was an 18-year-old art student when she posed for the photo in 1976 at Edgbaston Tennis Club.

Mrs Walker refused to comment on the recent furore surrounding the image, while some Twitter users said they did not believe the image was controversial.



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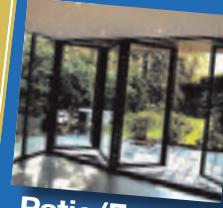
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hello to break the ambience.

There are 4 lounges to choose from each with its own unique personality. The front lounge is located within our specialised Dementia Unit which has recently undergone a full refurbishment. The Garden Lounge is the largest in the home with a bright and airy feel with countrywide views and accessibility for

all residents to the outside Sun Terrace. We also have 2 quaint lounges which have a more private, intimate and relaxing environment, ideal for family visits and special occasions.

Yew Tree Nursing Home also has its own pets. We have Duncan the Shetland Pony, Gemma the Cat, Joe the budgerigar, John and James the Guinea Pigs and a brood of hens collectively called the Cheeky Girls. Pets often expand the sociability of older people and have a positive benefit on our residents well-being.

Yew Tree have also been awarded the 'Gold Standards Framework' in Care Homes. The GSF (Gold Standards Framework) is a systematic, evidence based approach to optimising care for all patients approaching the end of their life.



Yew Tree Nursing Home also organise day trips throughout the Spring and Summer and also have Stag and Hen Parties whenever a member of staff is getting married.

Yew Tree Nursing Home aims to provide its residents with a secure, relaxed and homely environment in which their care, well-being and comfort is of prime importance. All staff will preserve and maintain dignity, individuality and privacy of all residents within a warm and caring environment and in doing so will be sensitive to the residents ever changing needs.

For any further information or to arrange a visit please call Carol Lightwood (Home Manager) of Vicky Mills (Business Manager) on 01562 710809

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fast theticket

Mind Games

Derren Brown
– Page 23



All aboard

The Ghost Train is
on its way – Page 23

M NATIVE
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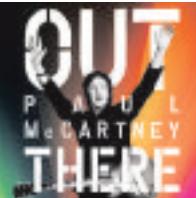
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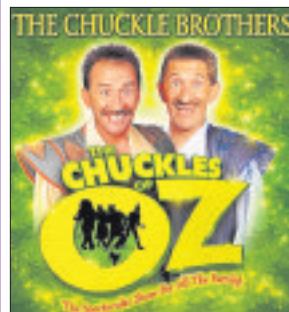
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Rap's reigning queen brings The Pinkprint Tour to Birmingham on Friday. The tour also features Grammy Award-nominated R&B superstar Trey Songz. Visit www.barclaycardarena.co.uk

The Chuckles
Of Oz

Saturday, 2pm & 5pm
Grand Theatre, W'ton
Take a glimpse into The Emerald City in a show packed with all the ingredients of a family show which will include audience participation and laugh-out-loud comedy. Visit www.thegrandtheatre.co.uk

Lee
Nelson

Saturday - Stafford Gatehouse
Sunday - Wulfrun, W'ton
Lee Nelson is back with a brand new suit and a new stand-up show full of fresh gags. He appears in Stafford on Saturday and will be in Wolverhampton on Sunday. Visit www.visitwolverhampton.com

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Barclaycard Arena, B'ham, B1 2PZ. Call 0121 780 4141

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Friday at 7.30pm, £12 - £15
The Robin 2, Bilston, WV14 7LJ. Call 01902 401211

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Saturday at 7.30pm, Free
Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge, DY8 3TB. Call 01384 374410

We Will Rock You
Friday at 8pm, £3
The River Rooms, Stourbridge, DY8 1JN. Call 01384 397177

Limehouse Lizzy
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Dirty DC
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Definitely Might Be
Sun at 7.30pm, 7.30pm, £8 - £11.25
The Robin 2, Bilston, WV14 7LJ. Call 01902 401211

Talon - Best of Eagles
Thu at 7.30pm, £14.50 - £24.25
Palace Theatre, Redditch, B98 8AE. Call 01527 65203

The Solid Silver 60s Show
Saturday at 7.30pm, £24.50 - £29
Symphony Hall, Birmingham, B1 2EA. Call 0121 780 3333

Buddy and the Illegal Crickets
Saturday at 7.30pm, £15 - £16
Prince of Wales Centre, Cannock, WS11 1DE. Call 01543 578762

Of Mice & Men
Friday at 6pm, £18.56
O2 Academy Birmingham, B1 1DB. Call 0121 622 8250

Edgar Broughton
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Ian Parker & his band
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Sleeping With Sirens & Pierce The Veil
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Sun at 8pm, £16.50
The Slade Rooms, Wolverhampton, WV1 1HP. Call 01902 552106

Box Of Light
Sun at 7pm, £7.05
O2 Academy Birmingham, B1 1DB. Call 0121 622 8250

JAZZ & BLUES

Rattlesnake Jake
Friday at 8pm - 2am, £5
Moochers, Stourbridge, DY8 1PH. Call 01384 671141

The Harp Live Jazz (April)
Sun at 12.30pm, Tue at 8.30pm, Free
The Harp Hotel, Albrighton, Wolverhampton, WV7 3JF. Call 01902 374381

RNB & SOUL

An Evening with The Atlantic Players

Friday at 8pm, £8.00 Adv
Hare & Hounds, Kings Heath, Birmingham, B14 7JZ. Call 0844 870 0000

FOLK & ACOUSTIC

Irish Session
Wed at 8pm, Free
Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge, DY8 3TB. Call 01384 374410

Brewood Acoustic Club Singers' Night
Thu at 8pm, £2 (£1 singers)
Brewood Cricket Club, ST19 9HX. Call 01902 850422

Sandpiper Folk Club Night
Wed at 7.45pm, £2
Pigot Arms, Pattingham, Wolverhampton, WV6 7BQ. Call 01902 700207

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Town Hall Birmingham, B3 3DQ. Call 0121 780 3333

Good Friday Bach St Matthew Passion
Friday at 2pm, £9.50 - £40
Symphony Hall, Birmingham, B1 2EA. Call 0121 780 3333

THEATRE

CBeebies Live!
Tue at 1.30pm, 4.45pm, £19.18 - £33.74
Genting Arena, Birmingham, B4 0 1NT. Call 0121 780 4141

ART EXHIBITIONS

Wolverhampton: New Art West Midlands

Tue, Wed, Thu at 10am - 5pm, Free
Wolverhampton Art Gallery, WV1 1DU. Call 01902 552055

ART EXHIBITIONS

The Current Situation

Tue, Wed, Thu at 10am - 5pm, Free
Wolverhampton Art Gallery, WV1 1DU. Call 01902 552055

ART EXHIBITIONS

Make a Felted Egg

Tue at 11am - 12.30pm, 1.30pm - 3pm, £3
Bilston Craft Gallery, Mount Pleasant, Bilston, WV14 7LU. Call 01902 572090

ART EXHIBITIONS

Make a Spring Posey

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Bilston Craft Gallery, Mount Pleasant, Bilston, WV14 7LU. Call 01902 572090

ART EXHIBITIONS

Stagecoach Easter Workshop

Tue, Wed, Thu at 9.30am - 4pm, Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton, WV14 4AN. Call 01902 572090

ART EXHIBITIONS

Cadbury Easter Egg Trail

Saturday, Sun, Mon at 11am - 4pm, £2.50
Moseley Old Hall, Featherstone, Wolverhampton, WV10 7HY. Call 01902 782808

Check out full listings in **the ticket** in Friday's Express & Star

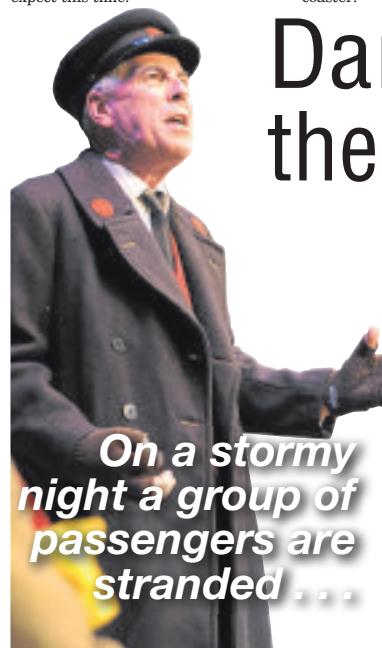
Master of illusion prays for a Miracle



'Magic is based in dishonesty. So you have to work harder to make it have artistic merit or relevance,' says Derren Brown

MIND-BENDING master of illusion Derren Brown is bringing his latest show, Miracle, to the West Midlands to amaze and baffle audiences.

Previous shows Svengali and Infamous have left packed venues stunned. This will be his seventh production since 2003 but the award-winning showman, who uses psychology to create the illusion of supernatural powers, is giving few clues on what to expect this time.



On a stormy night a group of passengers are stranded ...

Dare you catch the Ghost Train?

ON a dark and stormy night, when a group of passengers are stranded at a remote rural railway stop for the night, the stationmaster's chilling story of a phantom loco that is an omen of death apparently begins to come true.

Arnold Ridley's comedy thriller The Ghost Train is a British classic that is being brought to Wolverhampton Grand Theatre from Tuesday to Saturday, April 7 to 11, in a production starring actors Walsall-born Jeffrey Holland and his real life wife Judy Buxton. Ridley was inspired to write The Ghost Train after being forced to spend the night at Mangotsfield station near Bristol. But he is probably best known from his latter years when he played the bumbling Private Godfrey in the BBC comedy Dad's Army.

Suggested

The cast for this new production of his best known play will also feature some familiar faces from TV comedy, led by Jeffrey Holland, no stranger to the railway setting having starred in Oh Doctor Beeching! He is best known for the 1980s sitcoms Hi-de-Hi! and You Rang M'Lord?

Educated at Queen Mary's Grammar School, Jeffrey had no aspirations to act until a friend suggested they go to local drama group for something to do. He fell victim to the acting bug and, as a result, he joined The Minster Players Amateur Dramatic Society where, at 19, he decided it was to be an actor's life for him. He went on to formally train at The Birmingham School of Speech Training and Dramatic Art and made his professional debut in Henry Cecil's play No Fear Or Favour at the Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham, in 1967.

Soap villain joins Grand's angry men

ONE of TV's most popular actors, Jason Merrells, will lead the cast in the upcoming production of *Twelve Angry Men* when it is staged at Wolverhampton Grand Theatre in May.

The classic court drama is touring after a successful run in London's West End.

Merrells, best known for playing *Emmerdale* villain Declan Macey, will play juror number 8 – the role made famous by Henry Fonda in the movie version – but will only join the cast at four UK venues, including the Grand from May 18 to 23.

His start to TV success was in hit hospital drama *Casualty* and he went on to have leading roles in *Cutting It* and *Waterloo Road*.

Garbutt coming to play the NAC

VIN Garbutt, who is now back in full swing after a long illness, is playing at the Newhampton Arts Centre, Dunkley Street, Whitmore Reans, Wolverhampton on Saturday April 18.

GARBUTT will be supported by Stourbridge blues/folkman Sunjay Brayne.

The show starts 7.30pm and tickets are £12.50 plus a 10 per cent booking fee.

The Woodman Folk Club, Ashwood Marina, Kingswinford welcomes Liverpudlian Gary Edward Jones on Friday April 17.

Tickets for members cost £7 and non-members pay £1 more. Shows start around 8.30pm.

Little Mo makes it to Downing Street

TEN Downing Street comes under the spotlight in Steve Thompson's hard-hitting comedy *Feed The Beast* at Birmingham Rep Studio Theatre from April 16 to May 2.

The latest play from the Sherlock and Doctor Who writer looks at the first 100 days of a British Prime Minister. The cast includes National Theatre actor Gerald Kyd as the PM and Kacey Ainsworth, who was Little Mo in *EastEnders*, as Downing Street's chief of staff.

Director Peter Rowe said: "It is rare to be offered the chance to direct a new play like Steve's that talks about issues which are so of the moment."

NEW BAR MENU

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SUNDAY ROAST

12pm - 4pm

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- | | |
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| Saturday 4th April | DJ MARK Back to School Night |
| Sunday 5th April | EASTER SUNDAY Bugsy Karaoke |
| BANK HOLIDAY MONDAY | |
| Monday 6th April* | KIDS FUN DAY Bank Holiday FOLLOWED BY BUGSY KARAOKE |
| Friday 10th April | DJ MARK |
| Saturday 11th April | DJ MARK Karaoke Through The Ages |
| Sunday 12th April | BUGSY KARAOKE |
| Friday 17th April | DJ MARK |
| Saturday 18th April | FREEWATER Live Band |
| Sunday 19th April | BUGSY KARAOKE |
| Thursday 23rd April | ST GEORGES DAY |
| Friday 24th April | DJ WAYNE |
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TUESDAY 7TH APRIL

TUESDAY IT'S ... PREDATORS KARAOKE

WEDNESDAY 8TH APRIL

ADRIAN MICHAELS

THURSDAY 9TH APRIL

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Sizzle kicks starter with chicken tikka was nicely spiced



Vegetable samosas always prove popular



Range of dishes available at Regards in Anchor Road, Aldridge



Tables all nicely laid out and service is spot on

Highest Regards as restaurant curries favour for good service

GOING for a curry has become something of a favourite pastime in Blighty. The suggestion of a night eating a spicy meat dish brings fist pumps from friends and family all over the country.

It's become as much a part of our culture as tea, football and – unfortunately – the term of endearment 'bae'.

A good curry can banish a cold; I'm not sure a doctor would prescribe one but it works, I swear.

So three of us headed out to Regards in Aldridge on one particularly cold, dank evening to stick two fingers up to the miserable weather.

We were ruddy hungry. It'd been a long day. So a curry seemed the best remedy to our grumbling bellies. We'd been before, so knew what to expect. The service, as al-

ways, was spot on from the off.

Coats were taken immediately. A prime seating located near heater was offered. Drinks orders were taken without a pause.

And so we were left to peruse the menu once the pleasantries were completed. The choice here is great. There's a lot of what you'd expect – Balti dishes, bhunas, kormas, roganjs. But there are also some treats too.

Choice

Regards offer a selection of combination dishes for those feeling under pressure from all the choice on offer. Adore two curries and unsure which one you want today? Have them both. This section of the menu offers up a variety of options. And if none quite suits your taste, just put a quiet request in and a combination of your choice

isn't usually a problem. Regards also claim to be specialists in Tawa dishes. Either chicken, lamb or prawn, they're cooked with diced onions, green peppers and aromatic herbs and spices.

I opted for the sheekh kebab to start. They were plump, juicy and full of flavour. Some meat dishes like these can be a little dry, but certainly not on this occasion. Thumbs up!

It's never difficult to catch the eye of a member of staff and they attend immediately. Drinks were topped up and we were ready for the mains.

Here is where the combination dishes came into play. Chicken jalfrezi and lamb masala arrived, accompanied by pilau rice and a cheese naan.

The portions, again, were spot on. There was enough of each curry to get a real taste without pushing you over the edge. The rice

was great at soaking up the sauce and the naan, a little light on cheese maybe, certainly benefitted from a variety of flavours to be dipped into.

What can also be noted here is these curries feel quite light for their food type. Sometimes Indian food can be too rich and heavy, but this is certainly not the case here. It makes a nice change.

Ideal

However, it must also be said that they're a little light on the spice. This would be the ideal place for somebody just starting out on their curry voyage; even the medium dishes are very kind to the taste buds. Pretty full we didn't feel we could manage a dessert.

It was not much of a wait for the bill – a real bugbear of ours when the opposite occurs and the polite staff more than earned their tip.

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CHOICE


Amanda Mealing

Casualty (BBC1, 9.10pm)

Connie continues to help her friend Alfred, who has motor neurone disease, and gives him special treatment. But as his condition deteriorates, she is placed in a quandary when he asks her to help him die. A former heroin addict lies about his past to protect his future wife, little realising the danger he is putting himself in, while a young woman is brought in after deliberately crashing her car to claim on the insurance. Ethan discovers that Cal stole his money, Taylor disappears and lain applies for a new job. With a guest appearance from veteran singer and actress Anita Harris.

10.00 The National Lottery Live. The all-important winning numbers are revealed. **10.10 BBC News:** Weather. **10.30 Match of the Day.** Gary Lineker introduces highlights of the latest Premier League matches, including Arsenal v Liverpool at the Emirates Stadium and Everton v Southampton at Goodison Park; National Lottery Update. **11.55 Film: Surrogates.** (2009) An FBI agent in a future where people only interact through robot doubles ventures into the real world to catch a killer. Sci-fi thriller, with Bruce Willis. **1.20 Weather for the Week Ahead.** 1.25 BBC News.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. 10.00 Saturday Kitchen Live. 11.30 Mary Berry Cooks. (R) 12.00 BBC News: Weather. 12.10 Football Focus. 12.50 Saturday Sportsday. 1.00 Bargain Hunt. (R) 2.00 Homes Under the Hammer. 2.30 The Queen's Coronation. (R) 4.00 Final Score. 5.15 Film: Rise of the Guardians. (2012) Premiere. Magical beings from folklore unite to defeat an evil spirit plotting to steal the dreams of children. Animated adventure, with the voices of Chris Pine and Alec Baldwin.

6.40 BBC News.

6.50 Regional Programme.

7.00 The Voice UK. After seven weeks of blind auditions, two battles, two knockout rounds and two live shows, the final is here – with just four contestants remaining. Are they to be crowned winner and pick up a recording contract. Who will the public choose as The Voice 2015? Presented by Emma Willis and Marvin Humes. Last in the series.

9.10 Casualty. Connie continues to help her friend Alfred, who has motor neurone disease, and gives him special treatment. But as his condition deteriorates, she is placed in a quandary when he asks her to help him die. A former heroin addict lies about his past to protect his future wife, little realising the danger he is putting himself in, while a young woman is brought in after deliberately crashing her car to claim on the insurance. Ethan discovers that Cal stole his money, Taylor disappears and lain applies for a new job. With a guest appearance from veteran singer and actress Anita Harris.

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11.55 Film: Surrogates. (2009) An FBI agent in a future where people only interact through robot doubles ventures into the real world to catch a killer. Sci-fi thriller, with Bruce Willis.

1.20 Weather for the Week Ahead. 1.25 BBC News.

BBC2

6.05 Animal Park. (R) 7.05 The Football League Show. 8.25 Film: The Sword in the Stone. (1963) 9.40 Deadly on a Mission: Police to Police. (R) 10.10 Deadly on a Mission: Police to Police. (R) 10.40 Fred Dibnah: Magnificent Monuments. (R) 11.10 The Nature of Britain. (R) 12.00 A Taste of Britain. 12.15 Michel Roux's Service. (R) 1.30 The A to Z of TV Cooking. (R) 1.35 Great Directors: Talking Pictures. 2.20 Film: Wuthering Heights. (1939) Period drama, starring Merle Oberon and Laurence Olivier. 4.00 Kew on a Plate. (R) 5.00 Gardeners' World. (R) 5.30 Easter from King's.

6.45 Film: The Young Victoria. (2009)

The turbulent early years of the monarch who, shortly after being crowned, became caught in a power struggle between her mother and scheming politicians Lord Melbourn and Sir Robert Peel. Meanwhile, a romance develops with her German cousin and eventual husband, Prince Albert. Historical drama, with Emily Blunt, Rupert Friend, Paul Bettany and Miranda Richardson.

8.25 Film: Dad's Army. Pike borrows Mainwaring's new staff car to take his girlfriend to the cinema – but it breaks down, leaving the lovebirds stranded in the middle of nowhere.

9.00 Monteverdi in Mantua: The Genius of the Venetians. Simon Russell Beale travels to Italy to explore the volatile relationship between the Duke of Mantua and his court composer Claudio Monteverdi during the late Italian Renaissance.

10.00 OI XL. Extended edition. Suggs, Claudia O'Doherty, Jimmy Carr and Alan Davies attempt to answer host Stephen Fry's range of fiendish questions on the theme of long-lost things.

10.45 Film: Rik Mayall: Lord of Misrule. Simon Callow narrates a celebration of the comedian and actor's life and work, with contributions by Michael Palin, Simon Pegg, Lenny Henry, Ben Elton and Tim McInnerny. (R)

11.45 Film: A Beautiful Mind. (2001) Biopic of brilliant mathematician John Nash, whose genius was compromised by paranoid delusions and schizophrenia. Oscar-winning drama, starring Russell Crowe and William Beck.

1.55 Film: Revenge of the Bridesmaids. (2010) 3.15 This is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Bottom Knocker Street. 6.35 Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) 7.00 Canimals. (R) 7.10 Sooty. (R) 7.25 Signed Stories: Share a Story. (R) 7.30 Scrambled: Scrambled! 7.35 Scrambled: Noddy & Presto. (R) 7.50 Scrambled: Adventures in Time. 8.30 Scrambled: Scrambled! 8.50 Scrambled: Harry & Henry. 8.50 Scrambled: Hulk and Henry. 8.50 Scrambled: The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) 10.25 The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) 12.30 ITV News: Weather. 12.35 The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) 1.40 Film: The Great St Trinian's Train Robbery. (1966) Comedy, starring Frankie Howerd. 3.30 Off Their Rockers. (R) 4.00 Big Star's Little Star. (R) 5.00 Thunderbirds Are Go.

6.00 Regional Programme: Weather.

6.30 New You've Been Framed! New series. Sleuth comedy from the mind of Harry Hill, inspired by viewers' home videos.

7.00 Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway. Ant and Dec put England captain Wayne Rooney through his paces with their cheeky style of questioning, and Ashley Roberts challenges the hosts in the final round of Ant v Dec, as 2014 champion Dec tries to retain his title. Broadchurch actress Olivia Colman is the star guest announcer, and as usual, a member of the studio audience plays for the contents of a commercial break. Last in the series.

8.30 You're Back in the Room. Diversity pose as mannequins for the hypnotised contestants to decorate, with a general knowledge quiz, flower-arranging task and pizza-making also on the menu. Last in the series.

9.35 The Jonathan Ross Show. The host welcomes Kylie Minogue, Ethan Hawke, Bear Grylls and Clare Balding, and introduces music by Brits Critics' Choice winner James Bay. Last in the series.

10.30 ITV News: Weather.

10.50 Film: Forgetting Sarah Marshall. (2008) A jilted man takes a trip to Hawaii, only to find his ex and her new boyfriend are staying at the same resort. Romantic comedy, with Jason Segel, Kristen Bell and Rose Byrne.

12.45 Jackpot247. 3.00 The Jeremy Kyle Show USA. (R) 3.40 ITV Nightscreen.

12.55 Alan Carr: Chatty Man. (R) 1.55 Film: French Connection II. (1975) 3.55 Hollyoaks. (R)

CHANNEL 4

6.15 How I Met Your Mother. 6.40 How I Met Your Mother. 7.05 The King of Queens. (R) 7.30 The Queen of Queens. (R) 8.00 The Morning Line. 9.00 Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) 9.30 Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) 10.00 Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) 10.35 Frasier. (R) 11.05 Frasier. (R) 11.35 The Big Bang Theory. (R) 12.30 Marvel's Agents of SHIELD. (R) 1.30 Channel 4 Racing. Live coverage from Haydock Park and Kempton Park.

4.10 Come Dine with Me. A week of dinner parties in Tunbridge Wells, Kent.

5.15 The Simpsons. Bart catches Principal Skinner in a compromising situation. (R) 5.45 The Simpsons. Bart acquires a credit card. (R)

6.10 The Simpsons. Homer strikes up an unlikely friendship with Chief Wiggum during a stint of community service, but the honeymoon period is brought to an abrupt end during a showdown with Fat Tony. (R)

6.40 Channel 4 News.

7.00 The Lakes: Walking Through History. Tony Robinson walks 50 miles from Penrith to Ambleside and on to the Irish Sea at Ravenglass, exploring how the Romans conquered the Lake District. (R)

8.00 The World's Weirdest Weather. A flash flood in New Zealand that washed a dozen ells onto a street, a swarm of seemingly flying spiders in Brazil, and a strange wave that submerged an entire town in Argentina. (R)

9.00 End of the World Night. Humans started predicting the end of the world around 5,000 years ago, but while prophets have ways of impacting the world, today scientists are anxious about the possibility of global Armageddon, and it's a subject that fascinates many – frequently tackled in blockbuster films. In this one-off special, some of the world's foremost academics evaluate the many threats to civilisation, and reveal how it could all end.

10.35 Film: Knowing. (2009) An astrophysicist decodes a page of numbers revealing the dates of a series of disasters and tries to prevent them happening. Mystery thriller, starring Nicolas Cage and Rose Byrne.

12.55 Alan Carr: Chatty Man. (R) 1.55 Film: French Connection II. (1975) 3.55 Hollyoaks. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake! 10.30 SpongeBob SquarePants. 11.05 Access. 11.15 Ice Road Truckers. (R) 12.05 Ice Road Truckers. (R) 2.05 Film: The Devil's Brigade. (1968) 3.20 Film: The Nightmare Neighbour Next Door. (R) 5.30 Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away. (R)

6.20 Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away. A special edition of the programme giving an insight into the world of debt collection from the perspectives of creditors who owe money, their creditors and those who collect the payments. There are updates on some of the stories featured in the series earlier in the year, while two new cases reveal that life-changing debt can affect anyone – no matter how wealthy they appear to be. (R)

7.15 Police Interceptors. Jim intercepts a car containing cannabis, a late-night reveller talks himself into trouble and Sgt Baxter has his work cut out when confronted by a dishonest driver. (R)

8.00 5 News Weekend.

8.05 NCIS. An investigation into a rape and murder revives harrowing memories for Ducky, who once worked on a similar case in which the killer was never captured and vowed to return. (R)

9.00 NCIS: The Port-to-Port Killer. The agents examine the death of a seaman and find themselves working alongside Barrett. Gibbs makes his displeasure about the circumstances of the case well known, prompting the rest of the investigators to carry that he might be about to leave the NCIS again. Meanwhile, Ziva introduces her new boyfriend to her team-mates. (R)

10.00 CSI: Crime Scene Investigation. Russell and the team investigate a suspected hit-and-run, but the lack of skid marks on the road and the unusual impact angle leads them to think that this could be a suicide.

10.55 Film: Educating Rita. (1983) A Liverpool hairdresser enrolls on an Open University course, bringing much-needed inspiration to a boozey, world-weary tutor. Comedy drama, starring Michael Caine.

1.05 SuperCasino. 3.10 Grand Theft Auto: UK. (R) 4.00 Nanna Love: 50 Shades of Granny. (R) 4.50 Make It Big. (R) 5.15 Angels of Jarm. (R) 5.40 Roary the Racing Car. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Three

7.00 Great Movie Mistakes III: Not in 3D 8.00 Top Gear 9.10 Film: Pretty Woman (1990) 11.05 Family Guy 12.35 Killer Magic 1.05 Him & Her: The Wedding 3.30 Great TV Mistakes 4.00 Close

BBC Four

7.00 Chemistry – A Volatile History 8.00 Wild China 9.00 Inspector Montalbano 10.40 Definitely Dusty 11.40 Dusty Springfield at the BBC 12.40 Top of the Pops: 1980 1.15 Disco at the BBC 2.15 Wild China 3.15 Sounds of the 70s 2. Art House Glam – Get in the Swing 3.45 Close

ITV2

7.00 Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway 1.20 Reggie & Thunderbirds: No Strings Attached 2.25 Film: Beethoven's 2nd (1993) 4.15 Totally Bonkers: Guinness World Records 4.30 Mr Bean 5.40 Film: Evolution (2007) 7.30 Film: The Mummy Returns (2001) 8.00 Film: Juicy, Juicy, Special 10.50 Ibiza Weekender 11.50 Film: Death Race (2008) 1.55 Hell's Kitchen 2.30 Teleshopping

ITV3

11.20 Film: Carry on Jack (1963) 1.10 Film: Carry On Cowboy (1968) 3.10 Film: Carry On Girls (1966) 5.05 Film: Carry On Follow That Camel (1967) 7.05 Film: Carry On Cleo (1964) 9.00 Carry On Forever 10.00 Film: Carry On Camping (1969) 11.50 Film: 10 Little Indians (1974) 1.50 On the Buses 2.15 ITV3 Nightscreen 2.30 Teleshopping

ITV4

1.50 Film: Death of a Gunfighter (1969) 3.45 Film: The Hanging Tree (1959) 6.00 Storage Wars: Texas 6.55 Sted and Buried 7.55 River Monsters 9.00 Film: Hard to Kill (1990) 11.00 Live FIA Formula E Championship 1.30 Anthony Joshua: The Journey 2.30 Nitro Circus 2.50 ITV4 Nightscreen 3.00 Teleshopping

E4

11.30 Melissa & Joey 12.30 Baby Daddy 1.30 How I Met Your Mother 4.00 The Big Bang Theory 9.00 Film: Rush Hour 3 (2007) 10.50 Rude Tube 11.50 Troy 12.55 The One 10.50 Broke Girls 2.20 How I Met Your Mother 3.50 Taking New York 4.45 Celebrity Come Dine with Me: Made in Chelsea Special

Film4

11.00 The Lost World (1960) 1.00 My Neighbour Totoro (1988) 2.50 Diary of a Wimpy Kid (2010) 4.40 Inkhart (2008) 6.50 Night at the Museum: Battle of the Smithsonian (2009) 9.00 Friends with Benefits (2011) 11.10 Vehicle 19 (2013) 12.50 The Omén (1976) 3.15 Close

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Dudley Wood Neighbourhood Learning Centre
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Carters Lane Baptist Church
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Course title	Start	Day	Time	Cost	Weeks
French - Beginners Leasowes	21/4/15	Tues	19.00 - 21.00	£30.00	5
Guitar - 'Learn from the Legends' Leasowes	21/4/15	Tues	19.00 - 21.00	£60.00	10
Jewellery Making - All levels Leasowes	22/4/15	Wed	18.00 - 20.00	£30.00	5
Photography - Digital - All levels Leasowes	14/4/15	Tues	19.00 - 21.00	£30.00	5
Choral Singing Greenhill Centre	20/4/15	Mon	18.30 - 20.00	£22.50	5
Water Colour Painting - All levels Greenhill Centre	15/4/15	Wed	19.00 - 21.00	£60.00	10
Water Colour Painting - Intermediate Greenhill Centre	17/4/15	Fri	14.00 - 17.00	£90.00	10
ESOL Umar Mosque & CC	14/4/15	Tues	10.00 - 12.00	Call	6
Yoga - Mixed abilities Dudley Wood NLC	14/4/15	Tues	19.00 - 20.00	£30.00	10
Yoga - mixed abilities Dudley Wood NLC	14/4/15	Tues	17.30 - 18.30	£30.00	10
Tap Dance Dudley Wood NLC	23/4/15	Thurs	10.30 - 11.30	£12.00	4
Get Cooking Carters Lane Baptist Church	15/4/15	Wed	10.00 - 12.00	Free	7
Get Cooking Dudley Wood NLC	24/4/15	Fri	12.30 - 14.30	Free	7
Adult Social Care Level 1 Dudley Wood NLC	21/4/15	Tues	18.00 - 20.00	Call	12

CHOICE



Julie Walters

Indian Summers (Channel 4, 9pm)

As the British community turns out in force for the murder trial, Ian is racked with guilt about Ramu's arrest and prepares to act as his alibi, while Sooni takes advantage of the court case to gain some much-needed legal experience. Leena is torn apart in the witness box, causing Dougie to publicly support her – a move that humiliates Sarah. Ralph is terrified that the truth of Adam's true paternity will be revealed, while Aafrafin finally admits his true feelings for Alice. Drama set during the summer of 1932, telling the story of the decline of the British Empire and the birth of modern India. Starring Jaly Khan, Ikhlaque Khan, Edward Hogg, Julie Walters, Henry Lloyd-Hughes, Rick Warden, Peter Sullivan and Aysha Kala.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. 7.30 Match of the Day. (R) 9.00 David Suchet: In the Footsteps of St Peter. 10.00 Live Easter Sunday – From Manchester Cathedral. 11.00 Uriel et Orbi. 11.25 Bargain Hunt. (R) 12.15 MO & Co Extra: Will Mark Cross Win and the Match of the Day? (R) 1.15 Film: The Muppets. (2011) Comedy, starring Jason Segel. 2.55 Escape to the Country. (R) 3.55 The Truth About Fat. (R) 4.55 Songs of Praise. 5.30 BBC News. 5.50 Regional Programme.

6.00 Countryfile. The show comes from the Brockslands of Norfolk, where for Easter Sunday Matt Baker learns all about the importance of rabbits to the area – from their part in maintaining the heath to the link between rabbits and the stone-curlew, one of the rarest visiting birds. Ellie Harrison goes foraging for scrap metal to make sculptures, and visits Grimes Graves – the remains of Neolithic flint mines – and James Wong is in Liverpool for the launch of the Grow Wild campaign. Plus, Tom Heap reveals how the supply of fresh potatoes is outstripping demand, including Weather for the Week Ahead.

7.00 Antiques Roadshow. Fiona Bruce and the team visit Belton House in Lincolnshire, where finds include Chairman Man memorabilia and a funeral standard reportedly snatched from Oliver Cromwell's coffin.

8.00 Michael McIntyre's Easter Night at the Coliseum. The comedian presents an evening of variety from the Coliseum Theatre in London.

9.00 Poldark. Ross tries to form an alliance with his fellow mine-owners to build their own smelting company. Demelza resolves to reconcile Verity with Captain Blamey, and Mark has a new love.

10.00 BBC News.

10.20 Regional Programme.

10.30 Match of the Day 2. Mark Chapman reviews the latest Premier League matches, which were Sunderland v Newcastle United at the Stadium of Light and Burnley v Tottenham Hotspur at Turf Moor.

11.30 Film: Son of Rambow. (2007) Comedy, with Bill Milner.

1.00 Weather for the Week Ahead. 1.05 BBC News.

BBC2

6.05 Gardeners' World. (R) 6.35 Countryfile. (R) 7.35 The Beechgrove Garden. 8.05 The Gospel of John. 9.00 Saturday Kitchen Best Recipes. 10.30 Back in Time for Downton. (R) 11.00 Michael Roux's Service. (R) 12.30 Michel Roux's Service. (R) 1.30 The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) 2.25 The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) 3.30 The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) 12.35 ITV News: The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) 4.05 Flog It! (R) 4.50 Film: Prince of Persia: The Sands of Time. (2010) Fantasy adventure, starring Jake Gyllenhaal.

6.35 Pompidou. The heater in the caravan breaks down. Last in the series.

7.00 Springwatch at Easter. The wildlife programme returns for a one-off edition showcasing the best of British wildlife just as the countryside is bursting into colour and life and the breeding season is getting under way. Chris Packham and Michael Strachan will be hoping for plenty of eggs at one of the UK's largest seabird colonies, Martin Hughes-Games reports from Suffolk and Simon King is on Islay in the Inner Hebrides.

8.00 Caribbean with Simon Reeve. Simon begins the last leg of his journey in Nicaragua and visits the Rama-Kriol people, who face losing their ancestral homes due to construction of a new transoceanic railway. Simon then discovers Honduras, home to some of the most violent criminal gangs in the world, with San Pedro Sula having the highest murder rate of any city on the planet. Last in the series.

9.00 Louis Theroux: Transgender Kids. Louis travels to San Francisco, where he spends time with children who are undergoing gender-reassignment treatment at UCSF Hospital's Child and Adolescent Gender Centre.

10.00 Bluestone 42. New room-mates Ellen and Bird soon start bickering and Towerblock keeps putting off the difficult phone call home to his wife.

10.30 Jack Dee – So What? A 2013 stand-up performance at London's Hammersmith Apollo.

11.30 Film: Invincible. (2006) Fact-based sporting drama about an American football fan given the chance to play for the team he has supported all his life. With Mark Wahlberg.

1.10 Film: Hooper. (1979) 2.45 Sign Zone Countryfile. (R) 3.40 Hobly City. (R) 4.40 This is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Bottom Knocker Street. 6.35 Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) 7.00 Canimals. (R) 7.10 Sooty. (R) 7.25 Signed Stories: Share a Story. (R) 7.30 Scrambled. 9.25 The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) 10.25 The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) 12.35 ITV News: The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) 1.30 The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) 2.25 The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) 3.30 The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) 4.00 Farmyard Tales. (R) 4.30 Sunday Brunch. 12.30 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces. (R) 1.30 The Big Bang Theory. (R) 2.25 The Simpsons. (R) 2.55 Film: Honey, I Blew up the Kid. (1992) A scientist perfects a device for enlarging objects, but accidentally turns his infant son into a giant. Disney comedy sequel, with Rick Moranis. 4.40 Film: Hop. (2011) The Easter bunny's son abandons the chocolate-delivering business to seek his fortune in Hollywood. Part-animated comedy, starring James Marsden, with the voice of Russell Brand.

6.30 ITV News: Weather.

6.30 The Chase: Celebrity Special. Olympic gold medallist Greg Rutherford, Birds of a Feather star Lesley Joseph, Emmerdale's Matthew Wolfenden and football pundit Chris Kamara play for charity. Bradley Walsh hosts. (R)

7.30 Off Their Rockers. Pamela looks for love on a dating app. Seb mixes up his medication and Rosemary takes a peek at her grandson's internet history.

8.00 Vera. New series. Return of the crime drama starring Brenda Blethyn. The detective investigates a double murder at a holiday park on the Northumbrian coast, destroying three cabins. A young woman's body is discovered and the resort's owner, Jim Viner, fears the victim is his sister Deena when he returns from a weekend away with his daughter Clare. With Jim's suspicions confirmed, a police report then reveals Clare's boyfriend Ryan and his friends had been partying near the scene hours before the blaze started, but where are they now, and where is Deena's best friend Sally?

10.00 ITV News: Weather.

10.20 Bear Grylls: Mission Survive. The three remaining contenders battle to be crowned winner, as they abseil down a waterfall and follow the sound of a distress signal through a mangrove swamp. Last in the series. (R)

11.20 The Nation's Favourite 70s Number One. The 20 greatest hits of the 1970s, as voted for by the public, featuring interviews with hit-makers such as Art Garfunkel, Blondie, Ken Loach's comedy drama, starring Paul Brannigan and Hone Henshaw. Narrated by Zoe Ball. (R)

12.40 The Store. 2.45 Sign Zone Countryfile. (R) 3.40 Hobly City. (R) 4.40 This is BBC Two.

CHANNEL 4

CHANNEL 4

6.05 How I Met Your Mother. 6.30 How I Met Your Mother. 7.15 How I Met Your Mother. 7.35 Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) 8.00 Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) 8.30 Film: (R) 9.00 Farmyard Tales. (R) 10.30 Sunday Brunch. 12.30 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces. (R) 1.30 The Big Bang Theory. (R) 2.25 The Simpsons. (R) 2.55 Film: Honey, I Blew up the Kid. (1992) A scientist perfects a device for enlarging objects, but accidentally turns his infant son into a giant. Disney comedy sequel, with Rick Moranis. 4.40 Film: Hop. (2011) The Easter bunny's son abandons the chocolate-delivering business to seek his fortune in Hollywood. Part-animated comedy, starring James Marsden, with the voice of Russell Brand.

6.30 Channel 4 News.

7.00 Three in a Bed. A week of competitive B&B hosting, featuring a loud student party, supercar-racing at Silverstone, some cordon-bleu cooking and a slice of rural bliss.

8.00 Great Canal Journeys. Timothy West and Prunella Scales travel along the Forth and Clyde Canal and the Union Canal in a coast-to-coast adventure from Edinburgh to Glasgow. Last in the series.

9.00 Indian Summers. As the British community turns out in force for the murder trial, Ian is racked with guilt about Ramu's arrest and prepares to act as his alibi, while Sooni takes advantage of the court case to gain some much-needed legal experience. Leena is torn apart in the witness box, causing Dougie to publicly support her – a move that humiliates Sarah. Ralph is terrified that the truth of Adam's true paternity will be revealed, while Aafrafin finally admits his true feelings for Alice.

10.05 Gogglebox. Capturing the households' instant reactions to what they are watching on TV from the comfort of their own sofas. Narrated by Caroline Aherne. (R)

11.10 Film: The Angels' Share. (2012) Four people on community service plan to turn their fortunes around by stealing a cask of valuable whisky. Ken Loach's comedy drama, starring Paul Brannigan and Hone Henshaw.

1.00 Film: Oissa: The Tale of a Lonely Ghost. (2013) 2.50 Come Dine with Me. (R) 5.05 Jamie's Money Saving Meals. (R) 5.30 The Common Denominator. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake! Peppa Pig. 6.05 Angelina Ballerina. (R) 6.20 Pip Ahoy! (R) 6.30 The Man Show. (R) 6.40 Chloe's Closet. (R) 6.55 Roobarb and Custard Too. 7.00 Make Way for Modo. (R) 7.15 The Wombats. (R) 7.25 Little Friends. (R) 7.45 Wanda and the Alien. (R) 7.55 Zack and Quack. 8.15 Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) 8.30 Jelly Jamm. (R) 8.45 LazTown. 9.15 Dora and Friends: Tale of the Brave. (2014) Animated adventure, with the voice of Ben Small. 10.55 Nickelodeon's Kids' Choice Awards. (R) 10.55 Film: Patch Adams. (1998) Comedy drama, with Robin Williams. 2.20 Film: Baby Boom. (1987) Comedy, starring Diane Keaton. 4.25 Film: Fairytale: A True Story. (1997) Fact-based drama, with Florence Hoath and Elizabeth Earl.

6.15 5 News Weekend.

6.20 Film: Kelly's Heroes. (1970) A rebellious American soldier fighting in occupied France learns from a captive German officer the whereabouts of a fortune in Nazi gold. Recruiting the aid of three fellow soldiers, he puts together a daring plan to penetrate enemy lines to get their hands on the bullion. Second World War adventure, starring Clint Eastwood, Telly Savalas, Donald Sutherland, Don Rickles and Harry Dean Stanton. Edited for language.

9.00 Film: Hummingbird. (2013) Premier. A haunted special forces soldier returns to London from Afghanistan and assumes another man's identity to make a fresh start. He is drawn into the city's criminal underworld, where his skills prove valuable to the highest bidder, and plots revenge against the gangster who killed his girlfriend. Crime thriller, with Jason Statham and Angela Buzek.

11.10 Film: Blitz. (2011) An uncompromising cop with controversial violent methods is set on the trail of a serial killer who preys on police officers. Crime thriller, with Jason Statham.

1.10 SuperCine. Viewers get the chance to take part in live interactive gaming, with a mix of roulette-wheel spins and lively chat from the presenting team. **3.10 The Gadget Show.** Jon presents a selection of curious TVs. **4.00 House Doctor.** A cluttered B&B on the Norfolk coast. **4.25 Make It Big.** (R) 5.15 Angels of Jarm. (R) 5.40 Roary the Racing Car. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Three

7.00 The Voice UK 9.15 Film: Transiberian (2008) 11.00 Family Guy 11.45 Killer Magic 12.15 American Dad! 12.35 Family Guy 12.55 Bluestone 42 1.25 I Survived a Zombie Apocalypse 2.20 Beaten by My Boyfriend 2.25 Great Movie Mistakes 2.25 The Sequel 3.30 Killer Magic 4.00 Close

BBC Four

7.00 Arena: Ooh Er, Missus! The Frankie Howard Story 8.00 Shakespeare's Mother: The Secret Life of a Tudor Woman 9.00 Lost Cities of the Ancient World: The Truth About Meteorites 11.00 Freddie Mercury: The Great Pretender: Director's Cut 12.25 Queen: The Legendary 1975 Concert 1.15 My Blue Sky: The Story of Jeff Lynne and ELO 2.15 Jeff Lynne's ELO at Hyde Park

ITV2

1.45 Scorpion 3.15 You've Been Framed! 2.05 Film: Ben 3.15 Film: E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial (1982) 3.35 Film: & Day's Saturday Night Takeaway 7.10 Film: Despicable Me (2010) 9.00 Film: Skyfall (2012) 11.55 Film: Harold & Kumar Get the Munchies (2004) 1.40 Mom 2.20 Teleshopping 5.50 ITV2 Nightscreen

ITV3

14.45 Film: Carry on Henry (1971) 3.35 Film: Camp Out Your Conscience (1971) 3.25 Film: Carry on Loving (1970) 5.15 Film: Carry on Matron (1972) 7.05 Film: Carry on Up the Jungle (1970) 9.00 Carry on Forever 10.00 Film: Carry on Girls (1973) 11.50 Film: Stepitos and Son Ride Again (1973) 1.50 Wycliffe 2.45 On the Bus 3.10 ITV3 Nightscreen 3.40

ITV4

6.30 Goodwood 73rd Members' Meeting 7.30 Counting Cars 8.00 River Monsters 9.00 Film: The Deer Hunter (1978) 12.45 Film: Boogeyman (2004) 2.35 Nitro Circus 3.00 Teleshopping

E4

1.00 Film: The Never-Ending Story II: The Next Chapter (1991) 2.45 RudieTube Shorts 3.00 The Frozen Phenomenon 4.00 Celebrity Come Dine with Me: Made in Chelsea Special 5.00 The Big Bang Theory 8.00 Film: My Sister's Keeper (2009) 10.10 The Inbetweeners 12.25 Channel 4's Comedy Gala 1.25 The 100 2.20 Revenge 3.05 Rules of Engagement

Film4

11.00 Escape from the Planet of the Apes (1971) 1.00 Ponyo (2008) 3.10 Clash of the Titans (1981) 5.05 The Iron Giant (1999) 6.45 The Eagle (2011) 9.00 Snow White & the Huntsman (2012) 11.25 From Dusk Till Dawn (1996) 1.35 Damien: Omen II (1978) 3.50 Close

star extra TRAVEL

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Holidays by rail are becoming more and more popular which is why Diamond has increased the number of destinations to the rail programme. New additions include the Vermillion Coast, the Camargue, Lake Bled, Krakow, La Rioja and the Jungfrau Express to name a few.

Plus, travelling across Europe has never been easier thanks to the high-speed trains such as the French TGV or the German ICE and International Thalys with local train services connecting smaller towns. All holidays depart from London St Pancras and it may be possible to travel from a local train station for a selection of trips (additional charges apply).

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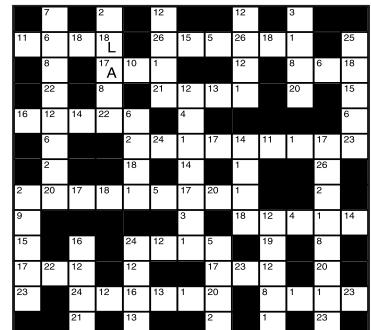
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BRAIN GYM No.319

Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	
F	V	Q	T	S	N	K	W	M	I	A	P	H	I	D	G	U	R	O	J	Z	B	C	Y	E	L	X

Quiz

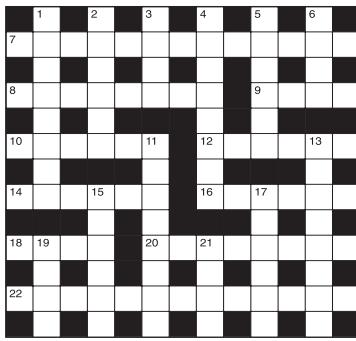
- What is the capital of Rhode Island?
- Which philosopher wrote On Liberty?
- Who wrote Moby-Dick in 1851?
- Which star of the film Uncle Buck died in March 1994?
- Of what is the Victoria Cross now made?
- Who was the mother of Richard I and King John?
- In which London park is the Serpentine?
- What does the Russian word 'soviet' mean?
- What is the first day of Lent called?
- What land did the US buy from Russia in 1867?

Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.

Cryptic Clues:

- Across
7. A system of detecting wireless site? (13)
8. See 6 Down
9. This will cut some of the potted geraniums (4)
10. French bitterness, I see! (6)
12. See 14 Across
14 & 12 Ac. One acts under what has become ingrained habit (6,6)
16. Alarmingly coiled, but far from fierce (6)
18. Featureless kind of race (4)
20. Showing lack of courtesy, I'm getting the stick about it (8)
22. Forcing one to adopt the faith - or just pretending (6,7)
- Down
1. Railing is in poor condition in time (8)
2. Used for shooting one of Falstaff's followers (6)
3. Scheme to put fifty in a vessel (4)
4. Filmed but not exposed (8)
5. The way of a townsman (6)
6 & 8 Ac. Kind of call for a runner (4-8)
11. Apples required for small fish (8)
13. Kind of clause for one of the family (8)
15. Get boat in a different way (6)
17. One dog - the miner has no end! (6)
19. Guide played by the star (4)
21. Noble support, we hear (4)
22. Understanding (13)



Quick Clues:

- Across
7. Blameworthy (13)
8. Impetus (8)
9. Entry (4)
10. Coating (6)
12. Rush (6)
14. Current (6)
16. Chief (6)
18. Fashionable (4)
20. Wizard (8)
22. Understanding (13)
- Down
1. Fragrant (8)
2. Mourn (6)
3. Closed (4)
4. Hostile (8)
5. Loiter (6)
6. Lump (4)
11. Recall (8)
13. Lift (8)
15. Get away (6)
17. Charge (6)
19. Band (4)
21. Vale (4)

Sudoku

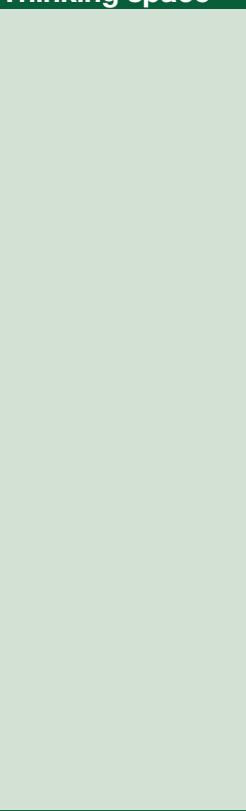
	1		2	3		6		
2	6	5				7		
9		7	6				4	
4	1	9			6			
6	9		3	5	1			
2			5			7		
7		9	4	5	2			
8	3	2						

Fill in the grid below so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS >
3 4 9 0 5 2 1 8 7
5 7 8 3 1 6 2 9
2 6 1 4 3 5 4 3
9 8 7 6 3 5 2 4 1
1 2 4 9 7 6 3 5 8
8 3 5 1 2 4 7 9 6
7 9 2 5 6 3 8 1 4
6 5 8 7 4 1 9 3 2
4 1 3 2 8 9 6 7 5

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS:
CRYPTIC - Across: 1 Gate; 3 Acute angle; 9 Director; 10 Pest; 12 Keeper; 14 Tartan; 15 Palace; 17 Belie; 18 Style; 19 Well done; 21 Run at a loss; 22 Hiss; Down: 2 Active part; 3 Ease; 4 Puff; 5 In the lead; 6 In the lead; 7 Go along; 13 Played an; 16 Enwrap; 17 Ballot; 18 Sort; 20 Dash; QUICK - Across: 1 Loss; 8 Positioned; 9 Handsome; 10 Same; 12 Revert; 14 Thirst; 15 Smoke; 17 Clever; 18 Glam; 19 Solvent; 21 Lumpy; 22 Dull; Down: 2 Ornament; 3 Sped; 4 Escort; 5 Street; 6 Conspire; 7 Idle; 11 Misleading; 13 Enormous; 16 Ensure; 17 Callow; 18 Gold; 20 Toss.

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Classified Ads

Luxury development at former brickworks launched

A NEW development of 170 luxury homes has been launched in Gospel End near Sedgley, by local homebuilder David Wilson Homes Mercia, as part of redevelopment work of the former Baggeridge Brickworks.

The development, known as Baggeridge Village, is located on Gospel End Road and opened on March 21. The historic former

brickworks was latterly owned by Wienerberger, and closed in 2008.

Around 350 new jobs and new investment will be brought to the area through Baggeridge Village, which was officially unveiled by Gavin Williamson, who is defending his parliamentary seat for South Staffordshire in the General Election, in front of dozens of local people and staff from David Wilson Homes Mercia.

He said: "I was delighted to formally open

Baggeridge Village. This is a high quality development and it will be exciting to see new residents become part of the Gospel End community."

Mr Williamson planted a silver birch tree at the site to mark the official opening of Baggeridge Village, which will retain its links to local history by retaining the former brickworks' factory chimney as a community focal point.

John Fitzgerald, managing director of David

Wilson Homes Mercia, said: "Baggeridge Village is a great new destination, putting this disused brown field site back to good use to the benefit of the local community, with high quality homes as well as numerous green open spaces and neighbourhood facilities.

David Wilson Homes Mercia is contributing financially towards local transport infrastructure, and providing open green spaces, sports playing pitches, a nature conservation area, maintenance of play areas and the ex-

tension of nearby Baggeridge Country Park. Some 350 jobs will be also underpinned by Baggeridge Village, including training opportunities for apprentices.

Eighteen-year-old David Wilson Homes apprentice Angus Ryan, who is studying for an NVQ Level 2 in Bricklaying at Shrewsbury College, also attended the launch of the site.

He said: "Now I'm working on a live building site I can see the links between what I've been learning and how to put it into practice."

Five-bed detached can be yours for £499,950



THIS superior five-bed detached in King Charles Road, Halesowen has been re-planned, extended and finished to an extremely high standard.

Having a detached double garage with a room above for perhaps a gym, it is for sale with Taylors Estate Agents at £499,950.

Spacious and beautifully decorated and presented, it has an entrance porch, a reception hall, WC, sitting room and lounge, a conservatory, a superb family suite comprising a luxury fitted kitchen, a dining area, a sitting area and access to the conservatory addition.

There is also a principal bedroom, a guest bedroom with an en suite, three further bedrooms, a stunning, luxuriously appointed house bathroom with access to the principal bedroom, a further bathroom and smart enclosed gardens.

Call 0121 5503978 or visit www.taylors-estate-agents.co.uk for more details.



Extended semi lies in popular location

THIS well presented and extended four-bedroomed semi in New Birmingham Road, Dudley lies in a popular location with excellent transport links.

It is for sale through G&T Properties at £229,000.

It has a porch, entrance hall, a lounge with a period style fireplace, a dining room with patio doors, kitchen/breakfast room with a beamed ceiling, cushion-air floor covering, glazed ceramic wall tiling, spot lighting, a lobby, laundry, bedroom one en suite, dressing room/bedroom four, two further bedrooms, a bathroom, garage and garden and garden stores/workshop. Call 01384 261997 or visit www.gandtproperties.co.uk



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ROWLEY REGIS, Powke Lane £895 pcm+fees
Modern style detached house on spacious corner plot within close proximity to local shops, schools and amenities. Featuring entrance hall, lounge, dining room, breakfast kitchen, utility and guest w.c. 4 generous bedrooms, family bathroom and en suite to master bedroom to the 1st floor. The property further benefits from having an integral garage, driveway, good gardens to front, side and rear, gas central heating and double glazing. EPC: C



BIRMINGHAM, Orion Building £800 pcm+fees
A fantastic opportunity to rent a fully furnished apartment in the heart of Birmingham City Centre. This 1 bed modern property overlooking the Mailbox features open plan living with 24 hour concierge service and secure underground parking (permit required), double glazed and electric heating. Viewings highly recommended. EPC: TBC



KIDDERMINSTER, Grosvenor Avenue £795 pcm+fees
Stunning 3 storey town house in a quiet cul-de-sac position within walking distance of Kidderminster train station. Completely refurbished to a very high standard. Front reception room, lounge with feature fireplace with wood-burner, modern fitted kitchen with appliances. 3 large double bedrooms, beautiful bathroom with separate shower cubicle and a roll edged clawed foot free standing bath. Not to be missed. EPC: E



HALESOWEN, Downing Street £695 pcm+fees
An immaculately presented and recently modernised semi-detached home, centrally located to Halesowen Town Centre, comprising of 3 good size bedrooms with fitted wardrobes, fitted kitchen with white goods, stunning lounge and separate dining room, family bathroom with shower, downstairs WC, gas central heating, double glazed, driveway parking, large rear garden, part furnished. A MUST SEE PROPERTY. EPC: E



**NEW
ROWLEY REGIS, Alwin Road** £650 pcm+fees
A delightful detached house which has been fully refurbished and comprises of: entrance hall, large lounge with dining area, newly fitted kitchen, 3 good size bedrooms & white bathroom. The property is well presented and comprises of: entrance porch, hallway, lounge with feature fireplace, modern kitchen with appliances, 3 good size bedrooms, modern bathroom with shower, private rear garden. Available Now. EPC: D Available Now.



STOURBRIDGE, Stourbridge Road £695 pcm+fees
An unfurnished 3 bedroom mid terraced property with off road parking to the rear, close to local amenities and main bus routes. The property is well presented and comprises of: entrance porch, hallway, lounge with feature fireplace, modern kitchen with appliances, 3 good size bedrooms, modern bathroom with shower, private rear garden. Available Now. EPC: D



**NEW
HALESOWEN, Stour Close** £550 pcm+fees
Beautifully presented and in a quiet location. This fantastic top floor apartment is in a sought after location, featuring 2 double bedrooms, modern kitchen with white goods, bathroom with shower, integral garage, gas heating, double glazing, allocated parking, communal gardens and garage. Well worth a viewing! EPC: C



HALESOWEN, Princess Crescent £550 pcm+fees
A very well presented 1st floor flat available in this popular and well located area. The property comprises of: modern kitchen with integrated dishwasher, good size lounge, 2 good size bedrooms, beautiful newly fitted bathroom with P shape bath with shower, integral garage & parking for 2 vehicles. EPC: D



HALESOWEN, Fatherless Barn Crescent £550 pcm+fees
An unfurnished 3 bedroom semi detached family home within the catchment area for Colley Lane Primary School and the number 9 bus. Featuring an entrance hall, lounge, dining room, kitchen & utility, 3 good size bedrooms & upstairs walk in shower room. Large rear garden & driveway. Available Now. EPC: C



HALESOWEN, Malt Mill Lane £535 pcm+fees
An unfurnished mid terraced house, within walking distance to Blackheath Town Centre and not far from Rowley Regis train station, briefly comprising of: 2 reception rooms, fitted kitchen, downstairs shower room, 2 double bedrooms. Benefits include rear garden, off road parking. EPC: E



CRADLEY HEATH, Meadow Walk £525 pcm+fees
Modern semi detached house within a popular residential area featuring gas central heating, spacious living room, modern fitted kitchen, downstairs house bathroom, 3 good size bedrooms, large rear garden, driveway parking for 2 cars. Available Immediately EPC: C



HALESOWEN, Witton Bank £525 pcm+fees
A well presented 2 bedroom 2nd floor apartment in a very sought after location. Having secure intercom entry, entrance hall, 2 double bedrooms, bathroom with shower, large lounge, kitchen, garage en block and communal gardens. Available Immediately EPC: C



**NEW
ROWLEY REGIS, Hanover Road** £499 pcm+fees
A well presented modern ground floor apartment featuring a fitted kitchen, lounge, 2 bedrooms, 1 master en-suite, bathroom and shower. Allocated parking to rear, electric heating and double glazing. EPC: D



DUDLEY, Lantern Road £495 pcm+fees
A beautifully presented mid terraced home close to local amenities. Featuring 2 bedrooms, modern fitted kitchen, spacious lounge, double glazing, gas central heating, rear garden and patio area, allocated parking. EPC: D



**NEW
HALESOWEN, Ladysmith Road** £495 pcm+fees
A mid terraced house in a sought after area for Colley Lane Primary School, bus links to Halesowen and Stourbridge. This house features 2 reception rooms, fitted kitchen with oven/hob, dining area, new downstairs shower room, 2 good size bedrooms, double glazing, gas central heating, rear garden. EPC: TBC



KIDDERMINSTER, Keats Place £485 pcm+fees
A well presented 2 bedroom ground floor flat, having accommodation including: hall, lounge, refitted kitchen with appliances, 2 bedrooms, bathroom, gas central heating, double glazing and cul de sac location. Virgin Broadband connection is available. Own entrance to the property. EPC: C



OLDBURY, Causeway Green Road £425 pcm+fees
This large, split level flat above shops, within walking distance to bus links and close to J2 of the M5, briefly comprising of: gas central heating, spacious living room, fitted kitchen, 2 double bedrooms, bathroom with shower, parking to rear, unfurnished. EPC: E



HALESOWEN, Belgrave Road £425 pcm+fees
A large ground floor modern apartment within walking distance to Blackheath Town Centre and local buses. Briefly comprising of: lounge, kitchen, 2 double bedrooms, newly fitted bathroom suite with shower. Gas central heating, small rear garden with private entrance. Available Now. EPC: TBC



HALESOWEN, Glynn Crescent £425 pcm+fees
A wonderfully presented 1st floor apartment, featuring open plan lounge/kitchen, double bedroom over looking communal gardens, modern shower room with large corner shower and driveway & garage. The property also features electric heating and double glazing. Ideally situated for local train station and other amenities. EPC: E



**NEW
KIDDERMINSTER, Bewdley Road** £425 pcm+fees
A fully re-furnished 1st floor flat comprising of: lounge, fitted kitchen with oven/hob, stairs leading to a 1 double bedroom, white bathroom suite with shower, gas central heating, double glazing. EPC: TBC



LYE, High Street £375 pcm+fees
Fully refurbished in the centre of Lye. This spacious 2nd floor apartment features a lovely lounge, 1 double bedroom, bathroom, modern and contemporary kitchen/diner, electric heating, double glazing, on road parking. Available now. EPC: E

Attractive semi reduced in price for quick sale



REDUCED for a quick sale, this well-presented and attractive three-bed semi in Himley Road, Dudley is for sale through Skitts Estate Agents at £175,000.

It boasts a 26foot lounge/diner and 24ft garage.

With double glazing and central heating it has an entrance hall, a lounge/diner with a cast iron multi fuel burner and patio doors, a stylish appealing kitchen, a laundry room,, a shower room and a rear garden.

For more details, call 01902 686868 or visit www.skitts.net



Executive detached in a cul-de-sac location



THIS four-bedroomed detached property in Yarners Close, Milking Bank, Dudley is set in a quiet cul-de-sac.

Having good sized family accommodation, it is for sale through Swinscoes at £269,950.

The property houses a porch, hallway with stairs off and laminate flooring, lounge with a bay window, feature fireplace and laminate flooring, dining room with French doors and laminate flooring, kitchen with oven, hob, extractor and utility, WC, four bedrooms, (en-suite to master) and a bathroom.

It also boasts double glazing (where specified), gas central heating, gardens and a garage. Call 01902 672274 or visit www.swinscoes.co.uk



Mazda brings lot to party

By Graham Breeze

Mazda is recovering quickly after UK sales took a big hit because of the pound to yen exchange rate – and you can expect things to get even better now that the new Mazda2 is in showrooms.

There's now a choice of 12 petrol and four diesels in a 16-strong line-up of the company's best-selling UK model and a five level grade structure of SE, SE-L, SE-L Nav, Sport and Sport Nav with prices from £11,995 to £17,395.

And with the brand's Skyactiv technology on board it's little wonder Mazda bosses are predicting a 24 percent sales growth this year against pretty flat industry sales.

The B-segment is a tough place to compete but using Skyactiv technology with its striking 'KODO – Soul of Motion' design philosophy, Mazda claim this model brings new levels of technological sophistication, driving pleasure and safety to the party.

At first glance there's no mistaking this latest addition to the Mazda family which has particularly attractive headlamp styling and a muscular stance.

But the outstanding features for me come in the safety department where Mazda has really outshone the rest of the competition in this sector.

There's an array of active safety systems which you don't normally get at this level, including Anti-lock Brakes (ABS), Electronic Brakeforce Distribution (EBD), Electronic

Brake Assist (EBA), Dynamic Stability Control (DSC), Traction Control System (TCS) and Emergency Stop Signalling (ESS).

You also get Hill Hold Assist (HHA) and a Tyre Pressure Monitoring System (TPMS) as standard across the model range.

SE-L (90ps & 105ps Diesel), Sport, Sport Nav grades and the Sports Launch Edition model are further equipped with a Lane Departure Warning System (LDWS), and Smart City Brake Support (SCBS).

Operating between speeds of 2.5 and 18.5mph, SCBS automatically applies the brakes if the system detects an imminent frontal impact.

Technology

There's also an optional Safety Pack on 115ps Sport Nav models offering even higher levels of driver assistance with High Beam Control (HBC), Blind Spot Monitoring (BSM) and Rear Cross Traffic Alert (RCTA) system, and an Active Driving Display.

Mazda has gone even further by introducing my favourite technology to the model with the arrival of head-up display to the B-segment for the first time. That means you get to see your speed displayed on the windscreen, so there's no excuse for picking up tickets.

The cabin is a comfortable place to be with increased shoulder room up front, but it's still a little tight for six-footers in the back and the boot fails the golf clubs test unless you fold down the splitting rear seats.

There's now an easy to handle "multi-media commander" situated between the front seats which enables the driver to control the seven-inch touch screen display system.



'Mazda might just be under-cooking their sales predictions. I think we will be seeing a lot of this car in the next 12 months.'

DAB radio features for the first time in the Mazda2 and, in SE-L Nav and Sport Nav grades, a new navigation system offers improved search features and three years of free map updates.

Mazda's in-car connectivity system works with compatible iPhone and Android smartphones to access a variety of free mobile content via Aha™, a cloud platform-based service which features thousands of stations, personalised, location-based services and both Twitter and Facebook audio feeds.

MZD Connect also supports iPod, MP3 and CD playback, terrestrial radio, SMS and readout functions.

The Skyactive 105PS Sports Diesel is my favourite from the range at £17,395 and producing only 89g/km of emissions.

On top of that you can reach 62mph in 10.1secs and get a top speed of 111mph and still achieve over 80mpg.

Mazda might just be under-cooking their sales predictions.

I think we will be seeing a lot of this car in the next 12 months.

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03/03 Audi TT Roadster 1.8 (150 bhp) T Convertible ONLY 58k MILES, Black, Alloys, Air Con, CD £5295 / £30 Per Week	08/08 Nissan Micra 1.2 16v (79bhp) Acenta+ 3dr, 48k, Grey Metallic, *LOW INSURANCE* Air Con £3995 / £19 Per Week
09/59 Suzuki SX4 1.5 GL 59k, Grey, Air Con, CD £4995 / £24 Per Week	07/57 Ford Fusion 1.4 Style Climate 5dr, Blue, *LOW INSURANCE* Air Con, CD, Climate Pack £3995 / £19 Per Week
09/09 Vauxhall Corsa 1.4 SXI 5dr, 46k, Black, Alloys, Air Con, CD £4495 / £22 Per Week	07/07 Suzuki Swift 1.3 GL *ONE OWNER* 47k, Burnt Orange, CD Player, E/Windows £3995 / £19 Per Week
07/57 Renault Kangoo 1.6 16v 95 Expression Automatic, 37k, Red, CD, E/Windows, Sliding Side Doors £4495 / £22 Per Week	06/06 Ford Fiesta 1.25 Style Climate 3dr, 59k, Black, *LOW INSURANCE* Air Con, Heated Screen, CD £3695 / £20 Per Week
07/07 Ford Fusion 1.6 TDCi Plus Diesel, 48k, Silver, *ONLY £30 ROAD TAX* *AVERAGE 62 MPG* Alloys £4495 / £22 Per Week	07/57 Fiat Punto 1.2 Dynamic 5dr, 39k, Blue, Alloys, Air Con, CD £3495 / £19 Per Week
08/58 Fiat Panda 1.4 100hp 39k, *LOW INSURANCE* Black, Alloys, Air Con, CD £4295 / £21 Per Week	03/03 Peugeot 307 1.6 Rapier 16v 78k, Silver, Alloys, Air Con, CD £1995 / £13 Per Week
03/03 Mercedes E220 CDi Diesel Classic 100k, Beige, Full Cream Leather, Alloys, CD, Air Con £4295 / £21 Per Week	03/03 MG ZS+ 1.8 Stepspeed AUTOMATIC 65k, Green, Alloys, Half Leather, Park Sensors £1695 / £15 Per Week

Finance example: Nissan Micra 1.2 16v (79bhp) Acenta+ 3dr, Cash Price £3995, Deposit £300, Amount of credit £4695, Fixed interest rate 6.25% Flat rate, 11.8% APR, 60 Payments of £80.83 (£18.66 per week) Total amount payable £5149.80 (Excludes £150 Document fee and £150 Completion fee, Subject to status)

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This estate from Skoda has a lot for the money

By Bill McCarthy



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11 C4 G Picasso 1.6 HDI VTR+ Red 17k	£11,495
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13 Note 1.4 N-Tec+ Red 15k	£8,995
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61 207 1.4 HDI Active 3dr Silver 20k	£6,295
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11 3008 1.6 HDI Sport EGC Vapor Grey 16k	£9,495
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59 Meriva 1.4 Design Black 60k	£3,995
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Skoda is bargain basement no longer, but still a bargain nevertheless and underpinned by the quality of the VW group.

So successful has the transformation of the Czech brand been, that it now challenges VW with a cheaper alternative that still feels of the highest quality.

There are many models, but the estate version of the Octavia is one of the best, offering practicality with a massive boot, excellent fuel economy, especially through the VW sourced engines and a solid build quality.

It offers the biggest boot space in its class, matching and shaming bigger cars.

It is also cheap to run for business users who will look keenly at the massive stowage space available with low CO2 emissions meaning.

There is also the four-wheel-drive version tested here which adds to the practicality. It won't be tackling river crossings, but will prove sure-footed and stable in muddy or snowy conditions thanks to the extra grip and upgraded suspension at the rear.

The exterior design is hardly eye-popping, it has an unfussy functional look that will not offend, although it features neat light clusters front and back, with all models featuring alloys wheels.

Add roof rails and it looks smarter still and like many estates these days, no longer the ugly duckling compared to the saloon.

Practical

The interior has a less-is-more simplicity, with a neat, practical layout which is intuitive and easy to use. High-quality soft touch plastics and hard-wearing upholstered seats give the car a feeling of quality and solidity.

Seats are adjustable so you can get a decent driving position, even for shorter people while all-round vision is good.

The best bit, of course, is the boot space, offering 610 litres of space with the rear seats in place, 1,740 litres with the rear bench folded, which can be done by releasing a single catch for the seats to fold flat.

A shopping net and cargo hooks will keep things stable in the cavernous space.

All models are well equipped with the mid-range SE tested here offering plenty: foglights, touchscreen infotainment screen, with CD player, Bluetooth, DAB digital radio four-spoke leather steering wheels, drive mode selection, dual zone climate control, USB and aux-in connection sockets, voice control for phone and navigation where specified.

Powerful

There is a choice of petrol and diesel engines with the model here featuring a powerful, yet frugal two-litre diesel. It is plenty quick enough, but fuel economy is stunning with a claimed 57.6mpg with 124 g/km of CO2 making it cheap to run.

Put your foot down and the car will hit 60mph from a standing start in just 8.7 seconds, but take care, economy plummets. It is a superb engine, refined and quiet and performs admirably on urban road or motorways.

As an aid to economical driving the SE features Driving Mode Selection, with Normal, Eco, Sport and Individual settings. These change the throttle setting and steering set up. Select economy and with stop/start technology, you really can eke the fuel out.

For safety there are seven airbags: front, front side, curtain and driver's knee, plus driver fatigue sensor, hill hold control, plus traction and stability control programmes and automatic post collision braking system.

Starting at £15,745, it's a lot of car for the money. Practical and spacious and reasonably stylish, it's hard to fault the Octavia Estate.

TESTED

Skoda Octavia Estate SE 4x4 2.0TDI

Price: £22,715

Mechanical: 150PS, 1,968cc diesel engine driving all wheels via 6-speed manual gearbox

Max speed: 132mph

0-60mph: 8.7 seconds

Combined mpg: 57.6

Insurance group: 19E

CO2 emissions: 124g/km

BIK rating: 20%

Warranty: 3yrs/60,000 miles

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caravans / motorhomes

ABI SUPREME EQUARRY 2 berth caravan, end bathroom, awning, winter cover plus numerous extras, including new tyres. £1,750 ono. 01902 296663.

AVONDALE WENLOCK 1998, 4 berth, single axle alloy wheels, end washroom, toilet, separate shower, full cooker, 3 way fridge, hot and cold water, blow air heating, fly screens, blinds. £1,500 ono. 01902 573588 or 07789 152980.

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BAILEY RANGER 550/6 2006 Series 5 Six Berth with End Fixed Bunks. Excellent condition, comes with full awning and other extras lovely family van £6,100. o.n.o. Telephone 07780 964792.



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COACHMAN 2 BERTH

420-2 model. 2003, well looked after, mover, warm air, fridge, gas cooker, hot water, blinds, many extras. 3 metre awning. £2,950. 01902 742819

COMPASS 1.996, 4 berth, good condition, £1,500 ono.

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DOREMA PORCH

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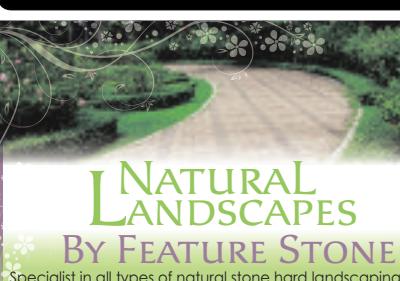
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Tividale in return to form to take the points

Tividale 2 Stocksbridge 1
TIVIDALE returned to form to grab the Evo-Stik First Division South spoils with a determined display against Stocksbridge Park Steels.

The hosts were on the front foot from the off and created the first chance after 13 minutes when striker Karl Edwards burst through on goal but could only shoot wide under pressure.

Tividale were on top early on took the lead on 22 minutes when a cross into the Stocksbridge penalty area from Nigel Penney was met by Leigh Downing, with his shot taking a deflection off Stocksbridge defender Rory Coleman and wrong-footing keeper Peter Denton.

It was almost 2-0 on 38 minutes when an Edwards header from a Zach Foster corner was cleared off the line by Coleman.

Stocksbridge levelled nine minutes into the second period.

The goal came from an innocuous free-kick 20 yards out from Coleman.

The ball looked to be covered by Tividale keeper Charlie Price but somehow evaded him and it ended up in the back of his net.

It was Tividale who bagged the winner. Substitute Ryan Winwood took on his man down the right wing, played the ball into fellow sub Jordan Archer, who swept the ball out to Downing on the left-side of the penalty area and he fired past Denton.

Tividale then managed the rest of the game with just the one serious threat to their goal. That was when a Harrison Biggins free-kick came back off Price's right upright and away to safety.

Sherwood said to be targeting young talent

VILLA manager Tim Sherwood has reportedly targeted summer moves for a number of young English players excelling in the Championship.

Leeds United duo Sam Byram and Lewis Cook and Ipswich Town pair Tyrone Mings and Ted Bishop are four of the players to have caught Sherwood's eye, according to reports.

All four have played key roles for their clubs this season and are all no older than 22.

Byram has been a Leeds regular since 2012 and made more than 100 appearances for the Yorkshire side, while Cook, Mings and Bishop have enjoyed breakout campaigns this term.

Meanwhile, American billionaire Randy Lerner is poised to complete the sale of Aston Villa to a UK-based group for £150million, it's claimed.

Nicholls – Albion's joker in the pack



Nicholls, front row, second from right shortly before the 1954 FA Cup final

TWENTY years ago, Albion fans lost one of their favourite sons. Johnny Nicholls' career might never have reached the heights it threatened to.

But the man whose skill for sniffing out goals was a major feature of the Baggies' 1950s 'Team of the Century' will always be revered by those who watched him as a cheeky, precociously-talented youngster. As a player, Nicholls, who died aged 64, was a fox in the box with the priceless knack of

sensing a chance. And in the dressing room, the inside forward was the joker in the pack.

Nicholls' finest hour for Albion came at Wembley in 1954 when he and Vic Buckingham's stylish side lifted the FA Cup after victory over Tom Finney's Preston. And the impact of the forward and his teammates were not lost on a young defender who would make his own mark on Baggies folklore 14 years later. "It's funny you should ask me this week of all weeks," says

Graham Williams, captain of Albion's 1968 FA Cup-winning side. "Next week we're having a day to remember Jeff Astle, and Johnny was just as funny as Jeff was."

"I was only a youth player when Johnny was about but being at the club at that time was marvellous. With him, Ronnie Allen, Ray Barlow and their like around, it was like being at a university of football. Johnny and Ronnie were both really funny and were always playing practical jokes on each other."

Gabriel is given green light to rejoin club

TARRYCK Gabriel has been given the green light to rejoin Halesowen Cricket Club.

The club's overseas player is currently making plans to make the trip from St Lucia to spend the summer at Seth Somers Park after a successful visa application.

And he said: "I am really looking forward to being back with Halesowen for a second season."

"I know the boys very well and I like the look of the new signings the club has made."

"It's fair to say I didn't have the most successful season last year, but I'm sure the benefit of a year's experience of playing in England will help. This is a big year for me and the club."

Meanwhile the club have been handed a double boost off the field with more grants coming their way.

The England and Wales Cricket Trust had already agreed to underwrite a substantial part of replacing the roll on cover tops and purchase of matting.

And repairs to the clubhouse roof can now be completed following the news that the Ibstock Cory Environmental trust had agreed to fund the project.

Tickets are selling fast for the special appearance from charismatic former World Darts semi-finalist Wayne Mardle at the club on Wednesday April 29.

Stourbridge based micro-brewery, Green Duck Beer Co have stepped up to the oche to sponsor the evening which will feature exhibition darts and a Q&A with the Sky Sports man.

Tickets are £10 and available from the club or online at sportsticketevents.co.uk.

Golden! Young team battle for medals

YOUNGSTERS from Halesowen's Ultimate Martial Arts Academy came away with medals after taking part in the Brazilian jiu jitsu national championships in Birmingham.

Lyla Tether, Logan and Jaden Muckley and Mark Harris train at the Halesowen gym and each took part in the national competition. The fighters came away with three golds and a silver medal between them. Coach Sean Smith, himself a two-time British jiu jitsu champion, said that the fights were electrifying.

This was the first competition for Lyla Tether, aged eight, from Quarry Bank, who fought in the under-30kg category. She won a gold medal after finishing off both her opponents by submission.

Smith said Lyla had been absolutely fantastic, adding: "She did everything according to plan. She listened and she went in there to win."

Proud

Brothers Logan and Jaden Muckley, aged eight and ten, from Stourbridge, came away from the competition with a gold and silver.

Logan had automatically qualified for a gold medal because he had no opponents in his age and weight category, but decided that he wanted to earn his award.

He was moved to a higher age group, where he competed with people up to two years older and more than eight KGs heavier, but still came away with a silver.

"Logan is very proud of himself," Smith said. "He was supposed to be fighting as an under-30kg fighter and decided he wanted to be moved up to 35kg, plus he was giving away a year in age. He won his first fight, lost his second fight, but he smashed it."

Older brother Jaden won three fights, all by submission, and won a gold medal.

Netherton's Mark Harris, 13, tackled three opponents to earn a gold medal.

Smith added: "It was his first competition. He submitted each of his opponents and was up on points for each." The whole competition was electrifying. They were doing everything they were training to do in the past. I was screaming across the mats, and they were totally focused on me."

Blast as the Bears bag Brendon



Brendon McCullum batting against South Africa during their Cricket World Cup semi-final

NEW ZEALAND captain and opening batsman Brendon McCullum is looking forward to playing at a "rocking" Edgbaston after signing for the last seven games of the Birmingham Bears' 2015 NatWest T20 Blast.

McCullum, 33, is recognised as one of the world's most explosive Twenty20 players and led the Black Caps to the final of ICC Cricket World Cup.

He will join up with the Bears following New Zealand's tour of England, with his first game scheduled to be against Lancashire Lightning at Emirates Old Trafford on Friday, June 26.

McCullum said: "The Birmingham Bears had a great season last year, including winning the NatWest T20 Blast, and hopefully I can make a big contribution and ensure that we can progress in the

tournament. Edgbaston is a fantastic ground to play at and hopefully it will be rocking for the big Friday night matches. I'm really excited about becoming a Bear and the challenge ahead."

Supporters will have the chance to see McCullum in action in three home matches, Derbyshire Falcons on July 3, Lancashire Lightning, July 17 and Northamptonshire Steelbacks, July 22.

Villa get to sport home strip in semi

VILLA have received what could be a potential good omen after it was revealed they will wear their home kit for next month's FA Cup semi-final.

They have worn the claret and blue strip in every round of the competition so far and will do so again at Wembley on April 19, after winning a coin toss which will also see them use the 'home' dressing room.

Yet the identity of their opponents will not be known until Tuesday, April 7 when Blackburn and Liverpool contest their sixth-round replay.

Villa have beaten Blackpool, Bournemouth, Leicester and Albion to reach the last four and while there is turbulence in other areas of the club's life the teams focus on reaching the final seems unshaken.



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Old Hales in win over battlers DK

DK 5 Old Halesians 48

ON paper it should have been a walkover for Hales, but DK had other ideas.

Early exchanges saw Hales flanker Loz Breeze make one of his many breaks during the game to score a try on four minutes.

The home side showed character and grit throughout the game and broke up many of Hales attacking moves. DK continued to spoil and it was 16 minutes before centre Andy Robinson found a gap and sprinted 40 metres to score, Gareth Bown missed the conversion. Hales could not put any long passages of play together, the scrum was solid but the line out was not dominant.

Andy Robinson who stretched his legs for a try on 30 minutes converted by Bown. Just before half time captain Tom Jordan received a ball and drove for the line for bonus point try, again conversion missed. On 47mins, Breeze again went on one of his runs, this time breaching the defence for a try, converted by Bown.

DK were winning some excellent line out ball from Hales infringements. They continually tested the visitors defence, on 61mins they were rewarded by a try.

Hales needed to steady the ship, DK lost both props to yellow cards and Hales' Matt Williams, replacement for Andy Robinson, also saw yellow for a high tackle.

On 70 minutes Hales were rewarded with a try from hooker Pete Fitzgerald, this opened the game up for Hales as the gallant home side tired.

Another break by the forwards, Evans took the ball on, fed the backs, Carl Robinson found the gap for a great try converted by Bown.

Towards the end of the game Luke Smith cut inside and out sprinted for a final try and Bown converted.

Thomas claims a titles hat-trick at championship

KRISTIAN THOMAS claimed a hat-trick of titles at the British Gymnastics Championships in Liverpool.

The Wolverhampton gymnast had to share the floor crown with Daniel Purvis after both scored exactly the same execution and difficulty.

Thomas, based at Earls Gym in Halesowen, continued his strong competition by taking the vault title with 15.05.

And on the horizontal bar Thomas claimed his third success with a 15.30. The 26-year-old also picked up a bronze on the rings.

Champion Amy Tinkler took the women's floor gold, with Commonwealth Games star Claudia Fragapane vaulting to glory. Ashley Watson was the king of the parallel and high bar masters gold, with Courtney Tulloch winning on rings.

Junior all-around champion Catherine Lyons continued her dominance with outstanding displays on beam, floor and vault for gold, with Georgia-Mae Fenton winning on bars. Alexander Buesnel and David Rae led the way in the disability men's finals.

Albion's Joker In Pack remembered
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Bears bag Brendon to have a big blast
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Heathens looking for perfect start

CRADLEY are desperate to get their National League title defence off to the perfect start when Coventry visit Perry Barr next Wednesday.

The Heathens had mixed feelings after their defeat at the hands of Birmingham in a thriller last Wednesday in the second leg of the Travel Plus Tours Challenge, but they had already done enough to win the trophy.

Now skipper Max Clegg wants to see his side secure all three points in another derby clash.

He said: "Birmingham are our toughest test and we just missed out in a last heat decider against them, but we were the better team over two legs. Hopefully we can bounce back and

Speedway

get a win under our belt against Coventry next Wednesday which would be the perfect way for us to start the league programme.

"Coventry haven't had as much racing as we have, it's been good to get a couple of competitive meetings under our belt against Birmingham so hopefully we can be sharper."

Clegg is also full of praise for the bumper crowd which packed Perry Barr with plenty of Heathens fans making the short trip from the Cradley, Dudley, Stourbridge and Quarry Bank areas. He said:

"It was great, coming from Yorkshire I don't know the area that well but I've got an idea that Cradley and the old stadium is about 12 miles from Birmingham so it's brilliant support."

"I hope they carry on for the season ahead because the management need convincing that it can work for everyone at Birmingham. I'm proud to be an asset of this great club and I want to be a part of the future here."

"Obviously I want to be a part of taking the club to a track closer to the Cradley area, but Birmingham is where we are at right now so let's enjoy it and have a great season."

YELTZ NOW 11 WITHOUT WIN

Belper 2 Yeltz 1

HALESOWEN have now gone 11 games without a win after a 2-1 defeat at Belper.

The Derbyshire side started the game on the bottom of the Evo-Stik Northern Premier with relegation already confirmed, but picked up their first win since November.

The Yeltz dominated periods of the game but couldn't convert chances into goals, Tom Tonks going close first after good work from Iyseed Christie and Ben Haseley.

The wind was making conditions difficult all evening, but Christie had a goal disallowed on 40 minutes when he beat the defence but was ruled offside by the linesman.

A minute later a mistake by the Halesowen defence let in Nabil Shariff who scored his fifth goal of the season to give the home side the advantage at the break.

On 66 minutes there was more slack defending by the visitors and Ben Turner slid in to make it 2-0.

Halesowen desperately tried to get back into the game and on 70 minutes Kristian Green saw a shot fly over the bar for John Hill's side.

Two minutes later, Ben Haseley should have scored from close range after a goalmouth scramble. Green got a consolation goal back two minutes into injury time for Yeltz but it proved too little, too late as Halesowen's winless run was extended.

Halesowen Town 1 Trafford 1

Ben Haseley rescued a point for Halesowen after a host of chances went begging for them to take the match against second-from-bottom Trafford.

Despite staring relegation in the face, a determined Trafford went close after six minutes but home goalkeeper Matt Sargeant had different ideas and saved in a one-on-one with Liam Blake.

Adam Jones landed a sucker punch to take the visitors into the lead from Andrew Smart's free-kick in the second minute of first half injury time.

The North's resistance was broken when Haseley side-stepped his marker to beat Read low down with a 70th minute equaliser from the edge of the penalty area. The Yeltz almost found a late winner but Read saved again.

Aston stops opponent in second



Boxer Ryan Aston on the offensive during the bout at the weekend

IT'S onwards and upwards for Ryan Aston and Ricky Summers after they added to their win ratios at the Venue in Dudley.

Dudley's Aston scored a great second-round stoppage over Martine Kukulis, as he went up the gears to bash away at the body.

Tipton's Summers went the distance with Josef Obeslo, but managed to hurt the Czech toughman in both the first and fourth round.

The two have now been told to prepare for action at Wolverhampton Civic Hall on Saturday June 6, where Aston will be looking to box for a title at light heavyweight.

Summers will undertake a six-rounder against an opponent who, as the show is due to

be aired on BoxNation, could be a formidable light heavyweight from Frank Warren's camp.

It's 10 without defeat now for Aston, who took less time to dispose of the Latvian than it took former sparring partner George Groves and fearsome world champion Gennady Golovkin.

Emerging to the strains of Blue Moon, he brought the sun down on Kukulis with 20 seconds of the second left.

All Kukulis could do was cover up and avoid getting knocked out, as Aston bashed away.

Throwing nothing back, Kukulis was pulled out when referee Robert Chalmers stepped in to confirm enough was enough.

Three out of four finals for Whiley

HALESOWEN'S Jordanne Whiley made it three finals out of four events in the USA as she finished runner-up in both the women's singles and doubles at the Cajun Classic Wheelchair Tennis Tournament in Baton Rouge over the weekend.

After partnering fellow Brit Lucy Shuker to the women's doubles title at the Pensacola Open two weeks ago, Whiley had Shuker on the opposite side of the net in both singles and doubles in Baton Rouge.

Whiley reached the singles semi-finals for the loss of just four games to ensure that one Brit on the Tennis Foundation's Wheelchair Tennis Performance Programme would be in the final and the British No. 1 and world No. 5 went on to edge ahead of world No. 10 Shuker 8-7 in their international career head-to-head after winning their singles semi-final 6-4, 4-6, 6-1.

A fine effort to land the title ended in a 6-3, 5-7, 6-4 loss to German world No. 4 and top seed Sabine Ellerbrock in Sunday's final and later in the day Ellerbrock and Shuker were both on the other side of the net in the women's doubles final.

Whiley partnered Marjolein Buis of the Netherlands to the final in their first tournament together since 2010, but a second doubles title in as many weeks proved elusive for the five-time Grand champion as Ellerbrock and Shuker took the decider 6-3, 7-6(5).

"It was a really close fight against Sabine in the singles final and I know what I did wrong, but Sabine did really well," said Whiley. "I'm proud of my spirit and I know what I have to work on in training. I also had a little shoulder niggle in the finals which prevented me from serving as I'd have liked to, so I think I did well considering that."

Tickets for QPR clash now on sale

TICKETS for Albion's Premier League game with QPR on Saturday are now on general sale.

Seats are priced at £25 for adults, £20 for over-65s, £15 for under-21s and students and £10 for under-17s.

Tickets are available to purchase online, in person from the East Stand Ticket Office or by calling 0121 227 2227.

Albion will welcome back Chris Brunt and Claudio Yacob from suspension.

They also hope to have strikers Saido Berahino and Brown Ideye fit as the Baggies look to extend a run of six wins in their last seven home games.

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